

**THE MINISTER
WHO WAS
DIFFERENT**

Elvin Baughman.

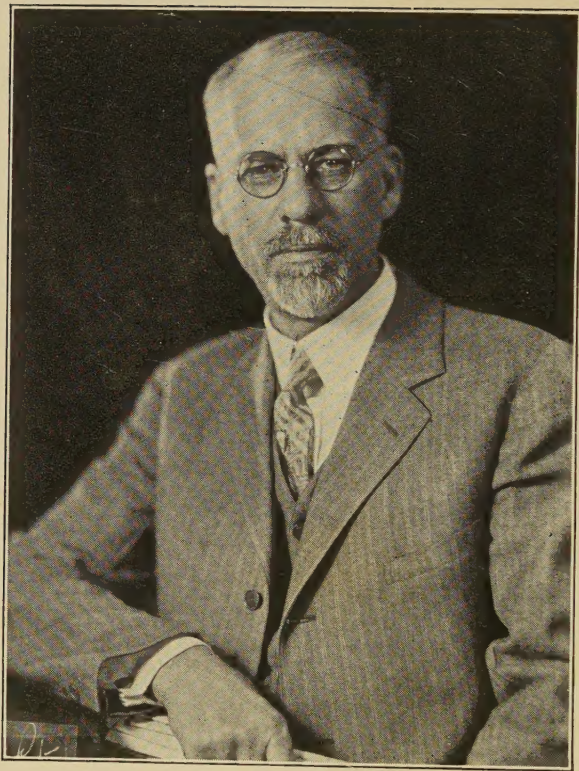
Nov. 1928

Elvin Baughman



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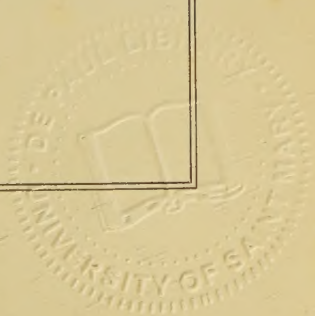
Elbert A. Smith

The Minister Who Was Different

By ELBERT A. SMITH



Independence, Missouri
Herald Publishing House
1928



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1928



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*I wandered long in darkness,
Yet sought the narrow way,
And my life was like the surging
Of the sea.*

Part I

The Minister Who Was Different

CHAPTER 1.

THE THREAT OF SALARY: THE MINISTER HAS A CHAMPION.

THE MINISTER'S WIFE rocked quietly to and fro, her hands occupied with the little piece of sewing that she had taken up after her visitors were seated. The two gentlemen, however, were ill at ease, and seemed not to know how to proceed with the business that had brought them there. They were members of her husband's church, quite obviously pillars of the church, yet apparently not originally designed to occupy as pillars in the same edifice, one being portly and florid, the other thin and yellow. Yet they were of equal height and so stood up fairly well under a weight of responsibility of which they were proudly conscious. At this precise moment each seemed anxious that the other should bear his full share of the burden, and as they fidgeted in their chairs, as only nervous men can fidget, they exchanged signs the intent of which, on the part of each, was to encourage the other to proceed.

There was nothing repulsive or even formidable in the appearance of the minister's wife. Far from it. She was so slight and girlish in appearance that one scarce could believe that she was the mother of the

little boy and girl playing in the adjoining room. A certain grace of person and of dress, and the delicate coloring of her fine, clear-cut features, in a way reminded one of the fragile beauty of rose petals.

Presently she spoke, tentatively, in a low, well-modulated voice: "I am sorry that my husband is not in."

The two pillars were not sorry. Gathering courage, the thin pillar found speech. "Well, Mrs. Luther, our business is with you. We know that you have a great deal of influence over your husband, and we wish to enlist it on our side, for his good."

"I always try to use my influence for his good. What is it that you have in mind?"

"Well,—er, the truth is, we are not entirely satisfied with your husband's course. Now, we are older than he, and have been here a good many years, and our judgment ought to count for something. We recognize your husband's ability and eloquence, and we know how he has built up the Walnut Street Church since he came here over two years ago. But he is making some mistakes that we feel should be pointed out to him."

"We feel they—er, ought to be pointed out, Mrs. Luther," echoed the corpulent pillar.

"Few people are perfect," assented Mrs. Luther, smilingly. "I am sure my husband will not object to having mistakes pointed out, if he has made them."

"Well," pursued the emboldened spokesmen, "we feel that he is making at least three grave errors. In the first place, he welcomes all classes of people

to the Walnut Street Church, and he is getting some in who are quite undesirable."

"I know," answered the low voice, "that he has been criticised for that; but he argues that he is sent out to seek and to save that which is lost. And he says that no matter how low a man is, we ought to give him every possible chance to work out his salvation before we abandon him."

"That is all right, in theory; but in practice it will make trouble. There are down-town missions provided for the very poor and the very low. Let them go there, where they will feel at home."

"Yes; but my husband argues that his church is our Father's house, and that these people are our Father's children, and so they ought to feel at home in the church; and he has a way of making them feel at home."

"Another thing," broke in the rotund pillar, less smooth and persuasive than his fellow; "he ought not to crack it to some people so hard. Some folks have little failings, but they are well to do and make good members. We don't want 'em drove away."

The minister's wife did not smile, though well she knew the personal animus that was back of this outbreak. When her husband attacked what he considered evil, he was like a mounted sabrer cutting his way straight through the ranks, and no fat pocketbook could serve as a helmet to the opposition.

Being more diplomatic, the slender pillar was disposed to keep personal injuries in the background, and went on: "Mrs. Luther, the chief complaint that

we have to make is that Mr. Luther is not in sympathy with the teachings of his church. He does not stand by the creed. He is open to a charge of heresy. His eloquence and popularity make him all the more dangerous."

"Perhaps he does not confine himself to the creed; but does he not preach the truth? He argues that his Bible is his creed, and that it is a minister's duty to teach whatever the Bible teaches."

"We can not argue whether all his ideas are biblical or not. They may be biblical and yet not wise to advocate. We pay his salary, and of course feel a right to speak about his teachings. He has a bright future before him, if he does not carry his ideas too far. What we wanted was to ask you to use your influence to hold him in check."

"I have never heard my husband preach anything that was not strictly both biblical and profitable," answered the wife, "and I could not urge him to keep silent in the interests of his salary."

The rotund pillar stood erect, his broad face irritably flushed, even his bald head suffused. "We pay the salary," he declared, harshly. "Every cent passes through these hands," thrusting them forward for inspection. "We've got a right to say what he shall preach. A minister ought to preach what he's hired to preach,—the same as a carpenter," he added, without regard to grammatical construction.

A little frosty chill seemed to surround the rose-leaf lady, but she did not frown, or elevate her voice, or hasten her utterance as she answered, "My husband is not like some ministers. You can not *hire*

him to preach *anything*. You can not buy him and sell him. He *is* like one carpenter who lived a great many years ago."

The lean pillar covered, as best he could with his slight proportions, the retreat of his defeated compatriot, who had assumed (to his surprise) something of the appearance of an accomplice.

Having closed the door after the routed cohorts, Rose Luther resumed her chair and her sewing, the afternoon sun shining through the big bay window, striking across her untroubled brow.

The minister's sister, Minnie, figures in this story, also; yet at this particular juncture not in a dignified way. A slender and awkward girl, yet in her teens, she did not take part in the conversation just closed. She sat in an obscure corner of the room, her feet upon the front round of her chair, her hands clasped about her knees, the fingers securely locked in front. It was a part of her business to make the short skirt seem longer, and a part of her business to conceal the fact that she was chewing gum. Becoming absorbed in the conversation she forgot these precautions, and chewed vigorously; while her big, black eyes balefully regarded the two pillars, who she felt were making a slanderous and seditious attack upon her brother.

The moment their backs were turned she sprang to her feet and vindictively shook a clenched little fist after them. Later she reached and announced the solemn conclusion that she would never marry a preacher, to be bossed around by every upstart deacon. This contingency being so remote, at the

time, no serious argument rent the home circle, of which she had been a part since the death of both of her parents.

CHAPTER 2.

THE EVENING SERVICE.

THE CONGREGATION of the Walnut Street Church sang the closing hymn, at the suggestion of the minister. The last echoes died away, and the benediction was pronounced. Yet in the inner ear the words still lingered :

“Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee;
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

“Though like a wanderer,
Daylight all gone,
Darkness comes over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.”

To the Reverend Sidney Luther they seemed to describe his exact situation. The evening's discourse had been one of the most logical, vehement, and elo-

quent sermons that he had ever preached; yet he well knew that it was not along the lines of his church creed. It was far and away beyond the limitations of that document. None of his colleagues of the cloth, in that particular denomination, would accept, indorse, or even condone the literal interpretations that he had given the Word of God.

He stood upon the rostrum, with the exaltation of the preacher still upon him, his being throbbing with the ebb and flow of spiritual and mental forces. He knew that he had done well, but that was in the background of his mind. He had preached new truths that he had not before been entirely sure of; he was sure of them now, and he was equally certain that his church would not stand back of him.

As the hymn was sung and the benediction pronounced, the reaction came gradually; his vigor ebbed away, and he leaned dejectedly upon his pulpit, his beloved pulpit, and looked with weary eyes upon his people, his beloved people.

It was his custom to mingle with the people at the close of each service and shake the hand of each person present, but to-night that pleasant duty was forgotten.

The people had come to prize that handshake, and, not to be defrauded, they came forward one by one to greet him, looking vaguely disquieted at his troubled attitude. Not all did this, however. A little group in the rear of the church surrounded the two "pillars," who were talking in low, but earnest tones.

The Walnut Street Church was one of the first

churches of the city of P——. The edifice was commodious, and well, though not elaborately furnished; and under the administration of Sidney Luther the former sparse attendance had grown and grown, until at every service the rooms were crowded.

When he preached, the audience listened. Men leaned forward in their seats, so as to miss no word or gesture. He was not like other preachers, but was quite himself in all that he said. He stated each idea so plainly and simply that none could fail to understand. His delivery was pleasing, his words well chosen; at times there was a gleam of wit that was always wit, or a touch of poetry, or a full, straight glance into the depths of human feeling, but he was never merely sentimental. He kept the subject ever in mind and pursued the straight road to a logical conclusion. And above all else his hearers felt that he was in earnest, that he meant every word that he said. Out of the pulpit, they found him ever the same quiet, unpretentious, true friend; one who made no distinction between rich and poor, high and low.

It did not surprise Rose Luther that people liked to hear her husband preach; anything else would have been incomprehensible. When he preached, she sat between her two children, her head held proudly a little high, worshipfully listening to the wisest and best man in the world, while he, at intervals permitting his gaze to rest upon her attentive countenance, beheld the sweetest and best of women.

Minnie also worshiped at his shrine, occupying a

front seat, not always willingly, her face the face of a meek, angelic saint, the while she surreptitiously nursed and harbored her gum. As her brother approached a climax, she dreamily reconsidered her resolution never to marry a preacher, forgot concealment, and chewed vigorously to the swing of the preacher's words. On such occasions a slight frown settled over the boyish, clear-cut, smooth-shaven, ministerial features, and a warning shake of the head, not intended for all eyes, brought her gum-chewing to an end.

At the close of the handshaking came a stranger, or one who was nearly a stranger to the minister, —a tall, old gentleman, with pointed, gray beard. Though aged, his spare form was erect, and his clear, blue eyes looked windows of perennial youth; humorous and fearless they looked at all men. When he spoke, only a little accent on an occasional word betrayed his Scottish origin. He shook the preacher's hand, and with frank cordiality declared, "I liket your preaching, young man. I have been to hear you several times. If ever you get out of a place to preach in, come down my way; though me-thinks you are destined for greater things than we can offer ye."

The minister passed his fingers abstractedly through his dark hair, "Mr. McBernie, I can not see far into the future, and the little that I see looks dark," he replied.

McBernie, with the freedom of an elderly man toward a young man, placed his hand upon the minister's shoulder, "What's the matter, lad? Do some

of these old fossils object to your preaching? I have been watching a bit, and I see two old foxes with their heads together, yonder. But never you fear, you have the people with you, if it should come to a fight."

Luther, disturbed yet amused at the old man's irreverent reference to certain members of the flock, replied, "Oh, I could hold the field all right, if I cared to fight, but it is not that; in a measure I am in the wrong. It is not right for me to teach certain doctrines in the name of my church when the church does not believe them. Nor would it be honorable for me to hold the charge longer, and keep silent about the things that I believe, and preach the things that I do not believe. I have simply outgrown the creed that I first espoused, and there is only one thing for me to do, and that is to resign my present position."

"I see; yes, I see how you're situated, and I expect you have picked the right course. It is what I would expect of ye. I'm no church member, but I believe the Bible, and I know you preach it; and let me give you a thought: If God is leadin' you he'll not let you starve by the way. Now, as I told you, we have a little community where I live, and there are some good people of us; if you want a job of preachin' let us know. I have been visiting here, but I'm home-ward bound to-morrow. I think you have adoptet the right course; but," and his eyes lighted with a cheerful gleam, as perhaps the eyes of his ancestors did, when proposing some raid, "if ye should decide to stay and fight it out I would liket to be here."

McBernie was accompanied by his youngest son, Donald, a languid youth who eyed the gum-chewing Minnie with disfavor. That maiden swiftly, slyly, yet unmistakably made a wry face at him and resumed her saintly mask of abstraction.

Rose Luther and her husband left the church as the janitor was extinguishing the lights. They walked homeward, side by side, through the hushed stillness of a summer Sabbath night. At intervals their path was obscured by the heavy shadow of maples, and again it emerged into the bright light of the street-lamps. Even so, as they planned and talked of the future, at times they seemed hopelessly lost in the gloom, but again emerged into the bright light of faith and calm assurance. The pointed shadow of the maple leaves in places showed sharp and clear on the pavement, under some electric light; and in their minds, under the light of faith, certain principles of duty were blocked out in black and white, more plainly than ever before.

"I do not care for myself," he was saying, "but it is for you and the children that I worry. We do not own even the roof that shelters us. What we have not spent we have given away. I have neither trade nor profession, and work is scarce. Can we make a living? Our salary has been generous and I have been able to buy at least a few of the pretty things that you ought to have in abundance."

"Don't worry about that," the soft voice replied, "I am sure we will get on all right."

"And there are the children, to be educated and given a little start in life." Unconsciously he held

little Viola close to him, and Rose Luther tightened her grasp upon the hand of little Arthur.

After a pause, the wife spoke again, "I am sure that dear old Scotchman, Mr. McBernie, was right. God is leading you. You know you have often felt it in your preaching; and he will take care of us."

"Yes," he cried, taking heart; "of what stuff is our faith made, that we should be afraid to do right! We have the promise. And we have each other and the children, and as long as we can be together we can make a happy home almost anywhere."

CHAPTER 3.

DRY BONES.

MCBERNIE visited the Walnut Street Church once again, once only, some time later, when he chanced to be in the city. The church was not nearly so well filled as of old, and the congregation had an air of aristocracy and frigidity not before seen.

A new face was behind the pulpit; it was the face of a clergyman, no doubt about that, the accessories proclaimed it to the world. The high collar, the white tie, the long black coat, the satisfied look of piety, the unctuous smile, the ministerial intonations, all were parts of one harmonious whole, the finest product of a theological seminary.

The services relentlessly pursued their way to the bitter end (a postlude) strictly according to the

printed schedule that McBernie had received from the usher. There were voluntaries; anthems that had but a short journey to go, and so went often over the same ground; solos, done in tremolo, with intermittent wailings that caused the old Scotchman to button his coat under his chin; and presently a sermon by the pastor, the Reverend J. Albert Hubbard. Its belated, inconsequential, unemphasized appearance in the printed program led McBernie to infer that no vast importance attached to the message that the preacher bore.

Of old when Sidney Luther stood up to speak, the audience had been galvanized into attention; now there was a visible subsidence, and the listeners sought easy attitudes; one good deacon, sound asleep, with head tilted back and mouth open, suggested to McBernie the thought that they were preparing to "take their medicine."

With carefully guarded vocal inflections, the pastor read some carefully selected passages from the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, omitting such verses as suggested unorthodox ideas:

"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of a valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live?"

"Here, my friends," began the pastor, "we have a picture intended to convey a spiritual meaning. Ezekiel, one of the major prophets, in a poetical

frame of mind, presents this allegory, and asks the question that is our text, namely, 'Can these bones live?'

"It is not, as I understand it, a real vision, nothing that really happened or ever will happen. Ezekiel, conscious of the inability of the masses to grasp abstract ideas, portrays this picture before them to make his meaning clear. Here we have the valley filled with bones, and notice, my friends, that they are not only dry, but very dry; and second, there are very many of them. Ezekiel stands before them in meditation and the Lord says to him, 'Can these bones live?'

"This valley typifies the world. The dry bones typify the heathen and sinners. We, like Ezekiel, stand before them and ask ourselves the question, 'Can these bones live?'

"In imagination we look at the teeming millions of heathen in China, India, and Africa. They have no religious enlightenment, such as we have; no schools, no colleges, no hospitals, no pastors [this with pathos]. We look at them and say, 'Can these dry heathen bones live?'

"Oh yes, there are very many of these dry heathen bones in *foreign* lands, and they are *very* dry. Even the Lord might well ask, 'Can *these* bones live?' Ah, friends, we ought to contribute generously to the fund for foreign missions!

"But we come nearer home, and we look at the slums of our great cities. They are filled with sinners, the ungodly, and the wicked. We repeat the text, "Can *these* bones live?" Yes, my friends, they

can; the down-town missions are doing a wonderful work, a wonderful work!

"We come *nearer* home. Even among *ourselves* there may be tendencies that will sap our spiritual life and make us like these bones. What are those tendencies?"

Here the speaker paused. He had it in mind to name pride; but Mrs. Banker Martin was looking at him, and he noticed, just in time, the color and texture of her evening dress. The theater leaped into his mind; but he happened to catch the eye of one, the rotund "pillar," who had told him that Sidney Luther was much too outspoken against "innocent amusements." He knew that Mrs. Brown gave whist parties, that Mrs. Humphrey Smith danced, that Humphrey Smith himself speculated in grain.

He skirted the thin ice, recovered his equilibrium, and labored heavily away toward safer foreign fields.

McBernie greeted the pastor at the close of the service and put to him the question most upon his mind, "What became of Mr Luther, the former pastor?"

Reverend Hubbard replied, a little stiffly, "I am sure I can not say just where he is; he resigned some time ago."

"And what was the trouble? Didn't the people like his preaching?"

"Well, you see, there was some discontent. I did not know him personally; but he seems to have been indiscreet in his pulpit utterances. He was too literal in his interpretation of the Bible, and wandered off on vain speculations, something that we all

ought to avoid. I am trying to build the church up again and remove the somewhat bad effects of my predecessor's pastorate."

"Ah, yes, so I take it! Ye gave us a *wonderful* discourse."

McBernie did not specify in what particular, and the preacher expanded with delighted complacency.

"Yes, yes; a wonderful sermon. I could not help thinking how well the discourse matched the subject."

The minister still expanded.

"Dry bones were your subject, I believe?"

A startled look came over the ministerial countenance.

"I never thinket how *veery* dry those bones were until I heard your sermon."

The ministerial expression of complacency still further subsided.

"I am no preacher, but let me give ye a thought; there are many preachers who would do well to read the tenth and eleventh verses of Isaiah's fifty-eighth chapter, when they are about to feed the flock and find naught for them but dry bones. Read it when you go home."

McBernie wrung the pastor's hand in farewell.

The minister's first act on reaching home was to read Isaiah, chapter 58, verses 10 and 11.

CHAPTER 4.

THE MAN IN OVERALLS.

MCBERNIE, walking down Main Street early Monday morning, in company with a friend, stopped suddenly to stare after a young man in blue overalls and other accoutrements of a laboring man, who had passed them, whistling, and swinging a dinner-bucket in his hand. Thereupon ensued the following conversation:

"Who might that be?"

"That? Oh, that is Sidney Luther, formerly pastor of the Walnut Street Church, and the best preacher in the city."

"So I thought, so I thought; but what's he doing?"

"Well, he quit preaching some time ago and went to work in a tannery."

"And did the congregation turn him out?"

"No, he resigned because he said he no longer agreed with the doctrines of his church. I was there the Sunday when he offered his resignation; I used to go frequently, but I don't any more."

"Too many dry bones I'm thinking?" queried McBernie, with a chuckle.

"I don't know what you are driving at, Mr. McBernie, but there was nothing dry about the services when Luther resigned. It came like a clap of thunder. You would have thought it was a funeral. Most every one broke down, and it was the first time that I ever knew Luther to fail as a preacher. Next

day he started out to hunt work, and pretty soon he struck a job in a tannery. Quite a come-down, eh? Quite different from some preachers, I say."

"Maybe, maybe," mused the old Scotchman, "but broadcloth or blue overalls, he's a man for a' that."

The change of garb and occupation gave Sidney Luther many an undreamed glimpse into human nature. The sorrow of his congregation at losing him was hearty, real, and in some instances effusive; yet, like most emotions in this busy world, transitory. Although he had treated all men alike, all men did not now treat him alike.

When he donned the blue overalls there came a subtle change in his relationship to others. There were some of his former parishioners who considered themselves social, financial, or literary luminaries, and now there was a modification of their greeting when circumstances threw them into unsought contact with the tanner. By degrees the cordial handshake and the cheery chat were lessened and curtailed, and faded away, by process of devolution, into nothingness. If they were fixed luminaries, he was a falling star, whose erratic course had carried him far below their brilliant rays.

Whereas the rose-leaf lady had been extolled and admired as the wife of the popular and eloquent minister, Sidney Luther; as the wife of Sid Luther, the tanner, she found herself in another sphere. Calling cards were not so frequently left at her door.

Neighborly curiosity ran high in the first stages of their adventure. An unskilled laborer could not

command large wages, and on the first occasion when the tanner's wife did her own washing the neighboring women on either side observed as carefully as possible the details of the process. When the last article was hung to dry, two displaced lace curtains dropped back into their wonted curves, and two women sighed with satisfaction, "Possibly the tanner sees his mistake by now!" As the months went by, a study of this same clothes-line gave out information relative to the financial status of the family.

However, there were some, enough to save some remnants of the credit of the race, who remained true friends to the tanner. They were mostly commonplace citizens, some rich and some poor, who knew no affectation. It even seemed that they were a little closer to the man than they had been to the minister. They no longer addressed him as Doctor Luther, but greeted him cheerily by his Christian name.

Luther was also surprised at himself. No one else knew or could understand how bitterly he missed his old position of preëminence. He did not know until now that the subtle flattery of adulation had been an intoxicating wine to inflame his ambition. More than once he realized that a wise Providence had led him to make his choice between principle and ambition before it was too late. Yet he was (not vainly) conscious of his splendid capabilities, and he was troubled at the thought of wasting his life sorting tan-bark and baling hides.

Those were not unhappy months, however. The light of the home burned pure and serene,—a smaller

home it was now. It was his haven of rest when the busy day's work was done. Here, in the long evenings, the tanner and the tanner's lady pursued a systematic study of the Scriptures; for she, wise woman, had not lost faith in God or in man or in her husband; and she knew that some day the three would effect a conjunction in such a way that her husband's powers could be used at God's direction for the blessing of man.

On such occasions, Minnie occupied the big arm-chair, her feet, by some well-learned trick, tucked away under her, gravely listening to the theological discussions; at intervals developing her maxillary muscles with the aid of yucatan.

CHAPTER 5.

AN UNEXPECTED LETTER, AND THE REPLY.

SIDNEY LUTHER whistled a lively air as he walked homeward in the evening twilight. Soft spring breezes from the countryside wandered down the city streets. A robin chirped in the top of a poplar-tree whose leaf-buds were daily swelling with their promise of future greenery. As he turned in at the open gate and walked up the path toward the little cottage that was his home, he noticed the spring flowers that had thrust themselves up through the sod bordering his walk; tulip, crocus, hyacinth, they made a brave and bright display,—later would come the wealth of roses and summer bloom.

His sister, admirer, and chum, Minnie, came flying from the open door to meet him. Flushed cheeks, red ribbons flying from her braided hair, bright plaid dress, laughing eyes, formed an attractive addition to the spring finery of the little yard. It struck him suddenly that the bright vivaciousness of the child would soon merge into the full, attractive bloom of young womanhood.

Presently the little family surrounded the suppertable (two blocks away "dinner" was being served in the Humphrey Smith residence). Grace was said, and the tanner fell to with the honest appetite of a laboring man. The tanner's wife sat in her place, a watchful eye upon the children. She was the same fine-featured, soft-tinted, unchallenged lady that she had been as "our minister's wife." Presently her low voice queried, "Well, Sidney, how did you get through the day?"

"Fine, fine," he responded heartily, at the same time intercepting an enormous spoonful of food that was approaching little Viola's mouth. "Take smaller bites, child," he chided.

"She's like Reverend Hubbard," spoke up Arthur, his own table manners not yet irreproachable. "I heard Tommy Watt's father say that when Reverend Hubbard took your place he bit off more"—again the hand intercepted.

Little Viola, who had been sitting stiff and rigid, winking very rapidly, now subsided into a pink and tousled heap of woe, rent with intermittent storms of sobs and reproaches.

Under the quiet and tactful touch of Rose Luther, the storm soon abated, and little Viola resumed her supper, only at intervals bending upon her father eyes in the blue sky of which lurked a few clouds of disapprobation.

"I got on fine," continued the tanner, picking up the thread of conversation which had become entangled around little Viola's silver spoon; and perhaps taking his simile from her way of eating, he went on: "Everything is coming my way. We'll see better times from now on, I hope."

At this juncture, Minnie sprang up with girlish impetuosity, exclaiming, "Oh, I forgot! The postman left a letter for brother. I'll get it this minute!"

The letter, when placed in the tanner's hand, looked innocent enough, yet unknown to them it was destined to change the tenor of their lives.

"Who is it from?" queried Rose Luther; and after the manner of women she took it from his hand and endeavored to identify it by the postmark or the handwriting, neither of which proved familiar.

"Perhaps," replied the husband, with twinkling eye, "we can tell by opening it," and he again possessed himself of the missive. A little pause and a rustling of paper followed, and then he announced, "McBernie,—now who is McBernie? Oh, I remember, the old Scotchman who used to come to our meetings when I was a 'journeyman clergyman.' What can he want?"

"Perhaps," interjected Minnie, "you can tell by reading it." The tanner joined in the laugh, at his own expense, and then read aloud:

“MENTONE, _____,

“April 25, 19——.

“MY DEAR MR. LUTHER:

“You may be a bit surprised to hear from me. You will remember that I called at the West End Church several times while yet you were its pastor, and once after, when Reverend Hubbard went to his cupboard, and bones were our portion *that* night. You will remember a little talk that we had the last time I met you. Ever since then I have nursed a project in my own head, and the time has come to christen it. I have kept track of you through a friend who is a merchant in your city, and I find that you have not made so sorry a failure as a laboring man, so perhaps you would feel no shame to go back to your calling as a preacher, because no one could say ye had to. I find, too, that you are somewhat connected with another church than the one that had no room in its creed for thought. Now, in this very community there are some members of the same church. Moreover, there is here a big church-building standing idle. The various denominations built a union church and started out in fine shape to teach peace on earth, and, lo; what happens but they all break up in a big fuss. There are no meetings for some time, yet all that is needed is some one to rally them. He would find some good sheep and some unruly goats, but more of the sheep, I’m thinking. The church is just in the edge of Mentone, and you could draw from both the town and the country. I live in the edge of town on a little farm, all by my-

self, which is bad for a Scotchman, of my age, who ought to be at the head of a clan. My youngest son is in college; the others are gone. My wife, who was too good for me, went over on the other side a year ago; and though I have not yet found the church that suits me, I am more than ever interested in laying up some treasure over there. Lad, I feel impressed to write. It is no salary we can promise; but one, at least, is hungering and thirsting to hear more of your kind of preaching. Is there now any hope at all that you could move down here? The country air would be fine for your children and the lady.

“Your servant,

“WILLIAM MCBERNIE.”

Minnie sat with both elbows on the table, her chin in her hands, attentively regarding her brother. Rose Luther also studied his face, but he folded the letter and put it in his pocket without remark.

The matter was not again mentioned until the evening prayer, and after that the tanner and his wife talked of it far into the night. Two weeks later McBernie received his reply.

“P_____, _____,
“May 11, 19——.

“MY DEAR MR. MCBERNIE:

“Your letter was received some two weeks ago. I have given it a careful reading and prayerful consideration. It came to me with a strange appeal, and I could not put it aside lightly, if I would. It may be that I will fall in with your plan, surprising as it now seems to me. I have worked at my trade for nearly two years, and I am doing well. I have

been foreman of my department for some time and command excellent wages; yet I am not satisfied with mere financial advancement. I feel that God has a work for me to do, and it may be that he is leading me your way. I am nominally connected with a church that claims to be the church of Christ. Its teachings seem to be more nearly in harmony with the teachings of Christ than those of any other church. Yet I am not fully satisfied that I have found or can find the church that in teaching and organization is in complete harmony with the New Testament church. If I do find one, I shall sever my connection with all others instantly. My mind is led to a favorable contemplation of your plan by reason of a peculiar dream that I have had repeated three nights in succession. I dreamed that I came to a little village or city, and that you met me. Presently we went to work to build a large building, of material that we found there ready to our hands. We had it nearly erected, and were quite proud of it, when one appeared on the scene who claimed to be an expert builder. Under his instructions we tore the former building down. We selected some of the material and rejected some of it, and with the material that we had saved, together with new material, we constructed a new building, smaller, but more beautiful than the former. Now I know that people who attach importance to dreams are regarded as superstitious. Yet God spoke to Joseph, regarding the designs of Herod, in a dream; he spoke to Joseph of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar, and many others in dreams. Does he do so in these

days? I know that he does. Moreover, the Scriptures bear me out in such a thought. You will hear from me again.

“Your obedient servant,

“SIDNEY LUTHER.”

Part II



CHAPTER 1.

THE CONQUEST OF MENTONE.

WHEN SIDNEY LUTHER and family alighted from the westbound express at Mentone, the first snow-flakes of the winter were softly filtering earthward. Not much of their future field of operation was open to scrutiny. Several loungers were assisting the depot to stand erect and defiling the white robe of earth with extract of horseshoe plug.

A board walk, leading townward, melted into misty nothingness, and presently out of the grayness whither it tended, McBernie materialized, as though new created by the fabled scientific "fortuitous concourse of atoms."

The little group trudged away, McBernie leading, followed by Sidney Luther, carrying little Viola, not quite so little now; then came Rose Luther, and next, Arthur, subdued and "close herded" by Minnie, who had grown tall, maidenly, and decorous. After devious turns and wanderings that induced vertigo to their sense of direction, McBernie's little home was reached.

Here the old gentleman lived alone, subsisting on a diet of bread and butter and hot Postum. Yet everything was neat and orderly, and the ladies, moved by mysterious feminine tendencies, glancing hastily over the woodwork of the interior, saw no pressing need for housecleaning. Several small shelves supported a collection of books, including

the Bible, also several scientific works, and "The Unspeakable Scot,"—the last named a book that the old man cordially hated, yet kept to read and rail at during periods that otherwise would have been lonely.

It was arranged for the family to lodge with McBernie until they could move into a little house, just a few yards away, that had been secured for them. A few hours of gray and mottled light were left, and Arthur wandered forth to investigate. The various mechanical devices of farm machinery that met his gaze required individual manipulation. The old Moline riding-plow was the first selected, being approached from a point of vantage in the rear. He loosened the right lever with some difficulty, and then it abruptly sprang forward and the young Balboa followed in swift, ungraceful flight, coming to earth on his stomach, amid a whirl of snow. Minnie rescued him, cleared his eyes and mouth until vocal expression was regained, and firmly but gently guided his footsteps into the house.

Sunday dawned clear and bright. Sleigh-bells jingled merrily up and down the village streets and over the country roads. A better view was secured, of the little tree-dotted village and the beautiful rolling country that surrounded it.

It can not be denied that the morning service at the old union church (as it was still called, though it now belonged to the church of which Luther was a minister,) was an event. All were agog to see and hear the "new preacher." They critically examined his clothing, his way of sitting and standing, his

gestures, his voice, his keen, pale face, black eyes, and high forehead, and marked this and that down for or against him. Also, the minister's wife was closely watched. "Will she be stuck-up?" "How does she dress?" "Will she be a good leader of the aid society?" These questions demanded attention. Also, how about the children? Were they well-behaved? Minnie resented the stares, of which she received her share, but added years and dignity prevented any adequate return. Rose Luther seemed unconscious of the scrutiny; though she flushed a little when compelled to subdue Arthur, who was bent on returning gratuitous insults surreptitiously offered by the boy two seats away.

Luther was happily unconscious of the crucible of public opinion in whose hot center he was being assayed. His mind was taken up with his sermon, which he prefaced with these remarks:

"Friends, brethren, sisters: I come among you, being led, as I believe, by the voice of God. But let us understand each other at the start. Many of you are members of the church that I have allied myself with. The motto of the church is, 'Where the Bible speaks we speak.' That seems a good enough motto; but I say, here and now, if I ever discover that the church does not live up to it, I shall go on and leave the church. In such an event my charge will revert into your hands, and I will endeavor to leave you not injured by reason of our association. I am and have been studying the Bible carefully. I believe that the churches have overlooked many truths contained therein. They have overlooked many prophe-

cies that deal with our own times. Who dares to believe the Bible as it is may follow me; only, however, so far as I follow Christ."

Evidently his years of contact with men as a tanner had enhanced rather than diminished his power as a preacher. Men listened. He was less boyish, more mature, and powerful. The consensus of opinion, arrived at after careful debate in the entry way, at home, over the back fence, and at the grocery-store, was favorable. Mrs. Barker, fat and comfortable, almost suffocatingly religious, not able to grasp complexities of doctrine, yet impressed with his indorsement of the Bible and his reverent way of speaking the name of the Deity, shook his hand cordially and declared, "What a blessed hope we have in the blessed book, and what a blessed thought that our blessed elder brother has done it all for us!" Luther looked at her keenly, but said nothing. Her husband, Norman Barker, the jolly drayman who had delivered Luther's trunks, a big six-foot whale of a man, with a voice like thunder, frankly grasped his hand in one excruciating wrench and bellowed, "You'll do, young man." Barker was supposed to be quite absolutely void of religion. His irreligious nature was Mrs. Barker's chief topic of testimony at the weekly prayer-meetings. Luther smiled at the hearty greeting. Miss Halloway, who was more sentimental than religious, and who led the soprano, declared that the new preacher was "simply divine." Deacon Hardpack, bent, old, but stubborn and critical, shook his head and peered from under his bushy brows. Mrs. Deacon Hardpack, kind old soul, was

vastly relieved when Rose Luther shook her hand cordially and smiled that sweet and winning smile, and immediately became a championess of the minister's wife's husband. The mass of the congregation felt that here was an honest man and one who knew how to preach. Mr. E. E. Miller, an old gentleman with a long, white beard, smooth-shaven upper lip, eyes like hawk's eyes, and a reputation of always having a grouch and of having broken up one or two congregations, greeted the new minister almost cordially. He indulged in the little, flitting, frosty smile that he used when almost pleased; he had never been pleased. The smile was like a brief glint of winter sun on the surface of a polished icicle. No one ever addressed Mr. E. E. Miller by his first name; he was always Mr. E. E. Miller.

The church was chaotic. Old grudges were unsettled, only held in abeyance by the curiosity over the new preacher. Disgruntled odds and ends of various denominations were in attendance. Secretly, a strong prejudice had been fostered in certain quarters against the radical ex-tanner. But the ascendancy of Luther was assured from the first day. He brought order out of chaos, won enemies over to his side, and silenced those who still nursed an enmity. He visited the sick and the well; preached here and there through the countryside, and soon had a reputation, for miles around, as a remarkable man. The old union church was crowded at all services.

Months passed away, with ever-increasing popularity, yet he made no demand for salary. What the

people wished to give they gave; and summer and winter he worked at odd jobs at odd times to help pay the rent of the little cottage into which they had moved, and in which they still lived, and to supply the humble board whither he came three times daily with the hearty appetite of a live, hard-worked preacher.

The quiet integrity of the minister's wife, and her charming personality, had helped in the conquest of Mentone. She had the habit, invaluable in a preacher's wife, of speaking the right thing at the right time, and of holding her counsel regarding things best left unsaid.

In certain circles the minister's popularity was immensely enhanced by the fact that he had a sister. Almost in a night, it seemed, Minnie Luther had become a young woman; of bright personality, quick wit, and not hideous countenance. She had long ago quite abandoned the gum habit. The young men's Bible-class was always well attended. There was a large accession of young male voices to the choir. Minnie sang alto; and Ephraim Wilson, who hitherto had sung an uncertain tenor, and stood near Miss Hallows, now cultivated a deep bass, and stood behind the altos. When Ephraim sang, "The half has never yet been told," he fixed his eyes firmly on Minnie's shining tresses, and thrilled from the top of his slightly bald head to the tips of his dusty shoes.

CHAPTER 2.

THE YOUNG MAN WHO HAD NO USE FOR RELIGION.

SEED-TIME and harvest came and went, the great earth swung close to the lordly sun, blushed, via peach and apple orchards, drew icily distant, and returned again with periodical enamorings, and there fell a day in June when McBernie's son, Donald, returned from college. He was quite the pride of the village, having stood high in his classes, having won out in an interstate oratorical contest, and furthermore, having at one time kicked a goal after having had two ribs broken in a scrimmage; still, furthermore, being a well known sprinter. Donald was not ignorant of these things.

Minnie, in the most casual way, observed him as he passed the Luther home. In the flitting of an eye she appraised him from head to foot and turned to more important matters. In that instant she gathered and arranged the following items: He is tall and broad-shouldered, but rather thin, looks like an athlete; he has a long, thin, Scotch-American face; he looks studious, a little too solemn; how odd, when his hat is lifted to you observe that his foretop, or whatever you call it, is gray; how odd for a young man! comes from study, perhaps; carries himself well; needs a little humbling.

Sunday morning, McBernie interrupted his son in the midst of a yawn. "Well, lad, we'll go to church to-day."

"Oh, father, spare me!" replied Donald.

"It'll not hurt ye," chuckled the father. "I dare say you have spent half your time at college in the chapel, and you can't stopet too sudden."

The young man waved a lordly gesture. "You can keep up the religious exercises," he replied. "Science is good enough for me. I like to deal with men who know things; preachers and weather prophets don't appeal to my eagle-eyed intelligence."

"See here, lad," urged the father, growing serious; "I know well the spirit of the schools. Bide your time before passing on the eternal verities. You've read a book or two, but you don't know everything. What think ye of this?" He opened the Bible and took a slip of paper from between the leaves. "It's an extract from the writings of the scientist, Lord Kelvin. I keep it here as a sort of book-mark, next the words, 'In the beginning God created,' etc." He proceeded to read:

" 'Mathematics and dynamics fail us when we contemplate the earth, fitted for life but lifeless, and try to imagine the commencement of life upon it. This certainly did not take place by any action of chemistry, or electricity, or crystalline grouping of molecules under the influence of force, or by any possible kind of fortuitous concourse of atoms. We must pause, face to face, with the mystery and miracle of the creation of living creatures.'

"I have lived a long time," said the old man, "and have seen many things. I thinket he told the truth. We can't know of the verities unless the one on the other side the curtain tells us. He has done so.

"Anyway, it will not hurt you to go to the church. The minister, Mr. Luther, and his family, will stop in on the way, and I would like for you to meet them."

"Thanks, no preachers in mine. Go on, father, to church, and enjoy yourself. Be good enough for two generations. But don't pester me with preachers."

With another lordly gesture he vanished into the rear room, just in time to avoid the visitors. Nevertheless he yielded enough to vulgar curiosity to look out of a side window that commanded the approach to the house. He contemplated the preacher, with a little uptilt of his long nose. The wife evoked a more lenient expression, one almost of pity; and as his eyes rested upon Minnie, a mild dawning of admiration appeared upon his features and grew encouragingly. For reasons known to herself, Minnie did not enter the house, but sat in company with little Viola upon the doorstep in the sweet June sun. Unknown to her, Donald's window commanded an excellent view of the front step.

In the parlor, the minister, his wife, and McBernie chatted in subdued tones. Presently the inner door opened and Donald strolled into the room.

"Father?" he asked, in an aggrieved tone, "are you not going to introduce me to your visitors?"

The old man arose hastily, feeling vaguely at fault, and introduced his son to the company.

When the time came to make a start toward the church, Donald was one of the first to don a hat, and admonished his father to hasten or they would be late.

The two young people were not formally introduced; yet such things adjust themselves, and when Donald lifted his hat to Minnie at the door of the Luther home, whither he had escorted her after meeting, he said, "May I accompany you to the evening services?"

Minnie scrutinized him closely, and responded, "I don't know; somehow I fancied that you would not be interested in preaching-services."

"Oh, I assure you that I have been—am—much interested in religious matters."

"Ah, I am glad. Your father said something about your not liking preachers, and sermons, and all that sort of thing."

"He did? Now father ought not to give me away in that way! I don't care much for preachers, as a rule, but your brother is different from most of them. I am quite interested in what he said this morning. Indeed, I am very anxious to follow up some ideas that he presented. I think some one ought to take an interest in young men who are really inclined—toward religion—don't you think?"

"Well, if you put it that way," said Minnie, with a backward glance, as she entered the house, "I will be glad to have your company to-night."

Donald turned away just in time to catch a malevolent glance from Ephraim Wilson, who was at that moment passing.

CHAPTER 3.

THE PEBBLE DROPS IN THE WATER.

SIDNEY LUTHER strolled down Main Street, in company with McBernie, in a most excellent frame of mind. He was returning from a meeting of the leading members of his congregation, whither he had been summoned, and where he had received a most touching evidence of the esteem in which he was now held.

The congregation had decided that it was time to do something substantial for the minister who had done so much for them. Accordingly a tract of land at the edge of town (enough to support a horse and cow, chickens, and pigs, as Mrs. Deacon Hardpack explained to her husband,) had been purchased, and a good-sized parsonage was even then in course of erection.

This had then been kept entirely from the knowledge of the pastor, until Mr. E. E. Miller delivered himself of the presentation speech, with a frosty smile, almost, but not quite genial, as a concession to the occasion.

It seemed that the minister and his family would be more comfortably situated than they had been for years.

Luther had observed some excitement and bustle about an empty store building during the day, and as they passed it this evening, homeward-bound with good news laden, he became aware that a crowd had gathered therein, and that some one was preaching

or lecturing. Not caring to enter, he and McBernie paused just outside the door and listened. They lingered to get the gist of the affair and to discover the identity of the speaker. This was what saluted their ears:

"The Latter Day Saints come to you with a divine message. Their position is either true or false. If true, you can not afford to ignore it.

"Solomon said, 'He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.' No man can afford to be ignorant when it is within his power to be informed correctly.

"To arrive at proper conclusions, men must understand both sides of a controversy. And yet it is evident to every student of history that the human family has reluctantly considered any proposition conflicting with its pet theories and preconceived ideas. Why should any man fear investigation if he is in the right? Why appeal to prejudice? Why resort to persecution? This, however, has always been the method of warfare against the truth.

"The power of public opinion in governing individual action has been one of the chief obstacles to the expansion of truth. No sooner has a new doctrine been presented than the cry is raised, 'Away with it.' Truth must come in contact with the traditions of men. Truth has won and will continue to win its way into the hearts of honest, God-fearing people. But how difficult it is to reach a man steeled against further investigation, and who is intrenched behind the walls of prejudice with which the bigot ever surrounds himself!

"The press and pulpit are largely responsible for the general misconception as to the position of the Latter Day Saints. All kinds of evil reports and malicious slanders have been against them. Orthodox ministers have ever been ready to prejudice the minds of the masses, without opportunity being afforded us to present our defense. We welcome the growing tendency to give us fair play, and feel confident that the name of 'Latter Day Saint' will soon be respected the world over.

"Some people do not care to know *who* the Latter Day Saints are, or *what* they believe. Do you? The moment the term 'Latter Day Saint' is mentioned, many exclaim, 'Oh, the Mormons! we want nothing to do with them!'

"The true Latter Day Saints are not 'Mormons.' This was a nickname given them by their enemies. When the defection as to church government and morals was made by Brigham Young in 1844, the name followed his adherents and they did not repudiate it. To-day it is used as a synonym for polygamy and all the evils perpetrated in Utah in the name of religion.

"There are two distinct, separate churches bearing this name: one is known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, commonly called 'Mormons,' with headquarters at Salt Lake City, Utah; the other is the *Reorganized* Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, with headquarters at Lamoni, Iowa.

"It may be asked, 'Why bear this name?'

"First. The term *saint* is a God-given name,

applied to his children in different ages of the world.

"Second. According to Bible prophecy we are now living in the 'latter days;' hence, if saints, we are 'Latter Day Saints.'

"Third. The term *Christian* was a name of derision applied to the early disciples at Antioch, 43 A. D. Will the advocates for the name *Christian* tell us what they were called prior to this? The Bible says they were called *saints*.

"Fourth. Christ said, 'I will build *my* church.' If the church is *his*, it must bear his name. The angel said to Joseph, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus;' and Paul speaks of 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom *the whole family in heaven and earth is named*.' His church or family on earth to-day, would therefore be the 'Church of Jesus Christ,' composed of 'Latter Day Saints.'

"Fifth. All Protestants concede that the original church was disorganized, hence the necessity for a restoration.

"Owing to the usurpation of church power by Brigham Young, still another reorganization was necessary, hence our church is very properly called the 'Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.' It is said that when you stand before the bar of God you will not be asked, 'Are you a Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Christian, or Adventist?' If you are a *saint* you will be acceptable, and you can not be a saint unless you belong to the 'church of Jesus Christ,' which is composed of *saints*.

"Are you a church member? If not, are you

desirous of becoming one? If so, carefully consider the origin of each church before you venture to ally yourself with any. Accept only that which bears the stamp of divine approval.

"In the year 1820, Joseph Smith attended a union revival meeting; and his religious nature responding to the fervent appeal for service, while thinking and studying the Bible in an endeavor to solve the question as to which of the churches was right, he read:

"'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.'—James 1: 5.

"It seems that God, by his Holy Spirit, witnessed to this humble seeker the truth of the above promise. Repairing to the seclusion of a near-by forest, he poured out his soul to God in earnest supplication for divine light. His prayer was answered, and he was told not to unite with the churches, as their creeds were not acceptable to God and that they taught 'for doctrines the commandments of men,' 'having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.'

"Only eighty years have passed since this angelic message was given, and nearly every church in Christendom is already unwittingly a witness to the truthfulness of that statement. What with creed revision and an adaptation of church rule and worship, in an attempt to suit the opinions of this advanced age, there is scarcely a church which has not changed front.

"The adherents of these institutions must take

one of two positions. If they contend that Joseph Smith was wrong and their creeds then correct, then they are in error now. If they affirm that their creed is now correct, then the statement made by the angel to Joseph Smith is sustained.

“That a revision of creed has been necessary evidences the human origin of these churches. God’s work never admits of reform or revision. Men and their institutions can very properly be reformed, but God and his work never. When the church so far departs from the divine schedule as to admit of reform, authority is withdrawn and darkness reigns. A recommitment of divine power and a restoration of gospel truth and the blessings which attended the same in the early church is the only way out of the ‘wilderness.’

“September, 1823, Joseph Smith had another vision, outlining the work to be done.

“April 6, 1830, the church was duly organized and immediately God began to confirm the believers ‘with signs following.’

“You ask what we mean by restoration of the gospel and of the church? We reply that after the departure of Christ a great apostasy occurred. This was clearly in fulfillment of prophecy, for Christ had said:

“‘And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.’—Matthew 11:12.

“Paul said: ‘For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your ownelves shall

men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.'—Acts 20: 29, 30.

"Also: 'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first.'—2 Thessalonians 2: 3.

"Again: 'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables.'—2 Timothy 4: 3, 4.

"In Revelation 12: 1-6, John gives a graphic description of this apostasy. After showing how the church would be disorganized or 'go into the wilderness,' he portrays the restoration of the gospel in these words: 'And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.'—Revelation 14: 6, 7.

"This angel did fly in the midst of heaven and delivered the keys, power, and authority of the everlasting gospel to Joseph Smith. This gospel we present to you, asking only that you give it thorough investigation; and should you find that it is in harmony with the church established by Jesus Christ, we invite you to become one with us."

The minister and his companion were not permitted to hear more. They were interrupted by the sudden exit of a fat, red-faced man, who was

encouraged, propelled, we may say, by an equally adipose lady, who followed in his wake. The man was Norman Barker, the genial drayman; the motive power, his wife, who seemed agitated. When the door was closed and she had recovered her breath, she loosened the floodgates of speech upon her unhappy spouse, and upon the minister and Mc-Bernie, who accompanied them down the street. "The idea," she exclaimed, "of those Mormons coming here to preach old Joe Smith—talk about him having revelations—and running other churches down! You'll not catch me in there again. I stood it just as long as I could and then I came out."

"Aw," protested her husband, in a voice that was intended to be subdued and conciliating, "they wa'n't nothin' so *very* bad about what they said, so far's I could see."

"Well there *was*, so far as I can see—it was *all* bad, and more to follow. They just give people the good things to start on, and then when they are blinded and deceived they bring out the bad, *plenty* of it."

"Haw, haw, haw!" rumbled the husband, his big chest shaking: "You say't was *all* bad, and that they gave us the *good* to-night and we'll git the bad later on. You're like th' lawyer that was defendin' the old woman that borrowed the kettle. He said he proposed to prove three things: First, the defendant never borrowed the kettle; second, she returned it in good condition; *and* third, it was cracked when she borrowed it.—Haw, haw, haw!"

"Well, I don't care," persisted the lady, "I think

Bro. Luther ought to go around to-morrow and visit every member of his congregation and tell them not to go to hear these people. Reverend Sly used to do that, when we lived in Marion and such kind of people came there. It's a pastor's duty to warn the flock."

Sidney Luther ventured no remark.

The lady persisted, "Don't you think you ought to go around to-morrow, early, and see all the members of your congregation and sound the warnin' voice? These elders are going to preach here right along, and scatter tracts from house to house, and the good Lord knows what in all."

Sidney Luther looked at her in a peculiar way, and said slowly, "I have no objections to any of my flock going to hear them. If I were to go and warn people in the way you suggest, it would look as though one of two things were true—either that I feared to have my teachings contrasted with the teachings of these elders, or else that I did not think that my people had judgment enough to know truth from error. Such a course would be contemptible."

Thus he justified Donald McBernie's opinion that he was different from some ministers.

As the minister opened his gate, a four-page tract fell to the ground. He picked it up and entered the house. As he threw it on the table, the striking heading of the tract attracted Minnie's attention, and she possessed herself of it.

"Do You Know?" she cried, with a flourish. "Listen, while I read this document, this imperti-

nent document that wants to know if I know! Listen! Attention all! I will now read:

“Do you know that Christ named the Apostle Paul as a ‘chosen vessel’ to bear the gospel unto the ‘Gentiles’? We ~~are~~ among the ‘Gentiles’ here named. We may look for him to have something of *especial* interest to *us*, and we are not disappointed. For us he has epitomized the principles of the gospel of Christ in a single sentence: ‘Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, and of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.’—Hebrews 6: 1-3. Here are six gospel principles that take one from the birth of faith clear through to the dawn of the Judgment Day.

“Do you know that the ‘epitome of faith’ of the Latter Day Saints reads as follows, touching gospel ordinances: ‘We believe that these ordinances are: First, Faith in God and the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of Hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost; fifth, We believe in the Resurrection of the Body, that the dead in Christ will rise first, and the rest of the dead will not live again until the thousand years are expired; sixth, We believe in the doctrine of Eternal Judgment, which provides that men shall be judged, rewarded, or punished according to the degree of good, or evil, they shall have done.’

“Do you know that this statement of faith parallels the one made by Paul?

“Do you know that no other published statement of faith and that no other creed has ever paralleled that statement since the days of the apostles?

“Do you know that men quarrel about the gifts and legacies willed them by their fathers and forget some of the gifts that Christ gave them? We are told: ‘He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.’—Ephesians 4:8-13. These were a perpetual gift, or until ‘we all come in the unity of the faith.’ The will is still in force, because we have not reached that time. Have we preserved the legacy? or are we satisfied with pastors and evangelists only?

“Do you know that this means that Christ organized his church in a certain specific way? ‘And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.’—1 Corinthians 12:28.

“Do you know that God organized his church in that way, and set those officers and blessings therein, and that man had no right to take them out?

“Do you know that the Latter Day Saints’ Church is organized after this plan and has in it all the officers and blessings named in the New Testament Scriptures?

“Do you know that you will find it difficult to find

any other church that is so organized, or that even believes in these things?

"Do you know that God never appointed any man to draw a line through the ages prior to the second coming of Christ and to say, Revelation ends here! Prophecy ends here! Miracles end here! Spiritual manifestations end here! and so on?

"Do you know that on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was promised to all whom God should call, till the end of time? (See Acts 2: 38, 39.)

"Do you know that the evidences of the Holy Spirit are as follows: 'The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.' —1 Corinthians 12: 7-11.

"Do you know that several of these nine gifts are rarely believed in, seldom preached, and almost never witnessed in the popular churches?

"Do you know that the Latter Day Saints' Church believes in them all, experiences them at times, and is living for a more abundant outpouring of them?

"Do you know, in a word, that we parallel Bible teaching along every line?

"Do you know that *you* ought to stand with the church that stands with the Bible?"

Lightness and raillery vanished from her tone

before she had finished reading. Some of these pointed paragraphs cut through indifference like a rapier.

Two elders walking homeward from the evening service struck up a hymn. By a coincident (perhaps) they were at the moment passing Sidney Luther's home, and their words sounded clear and musical:

"For the pebble has dropped in the water,
And the waves circle round with the shock."

CHAPTER 4.

"THE WAVES CIRCLE ROUND WITH THE SHOCK."

DONALD McBERNIE was leaning over the front gate of the Luther home; he was holding converse with Minnie Luther, as Ephraim Wilson sourly observed as he passed by. Ephraim noticed that the gate had acquired an habitual "sag." The little "Do you know?" tract was the ostensible topic of conversation, so advertised by occasional reference to its pages. But we refer the reader to that innocent document; what is there in it, that even a careful rereading can discover, that should cause Minnie's cheeks to rival the June roses at her side?

Presently, in the wake of Ephraim Wilson, came Mr. E. E. Miller. The June roses blanched a little at his coming. To his inquiry for her brother, Minnie informed him that Sidney Luther had gone

to the post-office. Was there anything that she could do? No. Mr. Miller understood from Sr. Barker that Luther positively refused to warn his communicants against the Latter Day Saint elders, and so, he, himself, Mr. E. E. Miller, was even then setting forth on that errand, which fact she might convey to Mr. Luther. The little frosty smile, which was used to express either almost pleasure or quite displeasure, flickered across Mr. E. E. Miller's countenance and curled the thin, smooth, upper lip.

In the wake of Mr. E. E. Miller came Luther, and from the opposite direction came a stranger. The stranger bowed to Mr. E. E. Miller, but obtained no recognition. Donald knew him as the elder who had preached in the old store building. Donald retired hastily, Minnie laughing at his precipitation; he had become quite at ease with one preacher, but would not yet risk being present at a conjunction of two of them.

Ten minutes later, Elder Phineas Pratt and Reverend Sidney Luther were seated in the parlor (study and living-room) of the latter, engaged in earnest debate.

"I understand something of your position," said Luther; "but this book that you offer me, this Book of Mormon, why should I spend time to read it? I know that we are commanded to prove all things and hold fast the good, but there are many things claiming attention these days. They must present some *prima facie* evidence that they are worth attention, before we are in duty bound to take them up. Now, what have you to offer, on the start, to indicate that

this book is what it claims to be? merely the unsupported word of Joseph Smith?"

"I congratulate you that you don't say 'Old Joe Smith,' " laughed the elder.

"Oh, I know that he was a young man when he died. Anyway, I wouldn't speak of him in that way, any more than I would speak of old Jack Wesley or old Alex Campbell. I believe in extending courtesy to *all* men. As a Christian I can do no less."

"I wish there were other ministers with your manners; but to your question. As you already understand, the Book of Mormon is a history of people who lived in North and South America, prior to modern history. A record of their history was inscribed on plates and buried before their civilization became extinct. By direction of God, Joseph Smith found the plates and translated the record. You are not left with his testimony alone. Others saw the plates and the angel. There were three, especially, who bore a strong testimony. They wrote it out and signed it, and it is found following the title-page and preface of every copy of the Book of Mormon. Let me read it to you. Notice it carefully:

" 'Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have

been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety, that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

“OLIVER COWDERY.

“DAVID WHITMER.

“MARTIN HARRIS.’

“There were eight others who saw the plates and signed the following testimony, found with the other:

“‘BE it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken,

which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did handle with our hands: and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety, that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

“‘CHRISTIAN WHITMER.

“‘JACOB WHITMER.

“‘PETER WHITMER, JUN.

“‘JOHN WHITMER.

“‘HIRAM PAGE.

“‘JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.

“‘HYRUM SMITH.

“‘SAMUEL H. SMITH.’

“Now notice,” continued the elder, “those men and women were well known in their community. They were farmers, teachers, storekeepers—just good, ordinary, American citizens. Joseph Smith was a poor, obscure, rather illiterate lad. What influence had he to bring to bear on those people to induce them to bear such a testimony? Nor had he a dollar to hire them to do so. The three witnesses first named repeated their testimony at intervals, even to the very hour of death, as we have documentary evidence to prove, notwithstanding slanderous stories to the contrary.

"These testimonies are in the nature of legal evidence, and ought to suffice as *prima facie* evidence sufficient to enlist your attention. Obviously, the plates could not be sent into all the world, to show to every investigator, more than could the cross on which Christ was crucified. But in the mouth of two or more reputable witnesses every word shall be established. So these men were permitted to see the plates and the angel, and we have their testimony.

"You can now read the book, see if its teachings are biblical and moral. You will also find that since the day of Joseph Smith explorers have visited South and Central America, and parts of North America then unknown, and have found the ruins of the very cities that the book describes. And more than that—"

"Hold on," cried Luther; "you need not argue this question with me at this time. I will take the book and read it, for myself, with an unprejudiced mind, and see for myself what it is."

"Good; that is all we ask of any man! Few will do that, though. You are quite different from some ministers."

Elder Pratt arose to take his leave.

"Wait a moment," said Luther; "I like to weigh everything on its merits. I have a congregation that I have been trying to teach to weigh things on their merits, comparing them with the teachings found in the Bible. Would you care to preach in my church some Sunday morning?"

Elder Pratt nearly gasped for breath. "I wouldn't

like anything better," he declared, "but we are quite unused to such proposals. Aren't you afraid that it will make trouble for you? We're not exactly popular in Mentone."

"Why, surely no one would object to that! If you have any truth, my people ought to know it. If you are impostors, they will be better informed after hearing you, and will know how to meet you in the future."

After the elder had departed, Sidney Luther remarked to his wife, "The man seems so surprised at what is simply courteous and fair, that it don't speak well for the treatment that other ministers have accorded him. The idea that a minister was willing to give him the bare chance to state what he believed seemed to take his breath away."

CHAPTER 5.

SIX SESSIONS OF THE CONCLAVE.

MCBERNIE had formed the habit of dropping in at the Luther home, to spend evenings that were not otherwise occupied. The hours were spent in discussion of Bible topics, and the old Scotchman formed a shrewd and pleasant addition to the little group of thinkers. It was his delight to bring forth some hard nut from his store of seventy years of gathering; and, after the others had hammered it a while, he would proceed to crack it with his, "Now, let me

give you a thought;" his genial, kindly old face aglow with pleasure.

Donald had dropped in, inconspicuously, soon after his arrival. At first he steered wide of the discussions, but soon Minnie noticed how he leaned forward in his chair, keenly watching the tide of thought ebb and flow.

Elder Pratt was one of the company on the evening of which we write. His meetings had been in progress some time. The elder with whom he traveled had been called away temporarily, and Elder Pratt was conducting the services alone. Intense prejudice had developed against his work. Sidney Luther had come in for a share of it, because of the fact that he attended the meetings when he chose to do so. In reality, he was quietly but thoroughly examining the elder's message, with a determination to strike it hard, if he found it false. So it had become his habit to invite the elder home, after the evening meeting, to spend a few moments in conversation, —to form one of the "conclave." The sessions were necessarily short, because of the lateness of the hour, yet no time was wasted.

It was Sunday evening. Coming from his own services, via the store-building where Elder Pratt held forth, Luther had brought the elder with him. They found Mrs. Luther, McBernie, Donald, and Minnie seated around the study table.

"Now," began Sidney Luther, "I want to ask you about those doctrines that you term the first principles. Where do you get the idea of first principles?"

"We get it from the opening verses of the sixth chapter of Hebrews. I will read:

" 'Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.'

"You will notice," continued Elder Pratt, "that the six doctrines here named are called the 'principles of the doctrine of Christ,' the 'foundation.' It is a good enough statement of faith for us, and we take it just as it stands; no human creed can equal it.

"But how about the opening remark, '*leaving* the principles?' " queried Luther.

"We do not understand that it can *possibly* mean to *abandon* those doctrines," replied Elder Pratt. "Surely you would not advise any one to leave faith, in that sense? The people here addressed had repented and been baptized. They were not to backslide, and in another year be converted and baptized again, as some do to-day. The cry was for them to 'go on,' one translation says, '*not* leaving the principles.' The doctrines here named were and are essentially a part of the gospel, and must remain so. Every one of them is sustained by numerous scriptural references."

"I notice," said Luther, "that there are six of these doctrines named: faith, repentance, baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection, and eternal judgment. I propose that we take them up one at a time and examine them. I wish to get your point

of view on each of them. We may as well get right down to your fundamental doctrines."

"Very well," said Elder Pratt; "we will take faith. What do you wish to know about faith?"

"Well, first," replied Luther; "how much importance do you attach to the principle of faith?"

"Just this much, 'Without faith it is impossible to please him' (Hebrews 11:6). One who has no faith in God will not and can not coöperate with God."

"Very well, in what do you have faith?"

"Why, in God; in his Son Jesus Christ, conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary; and in the plan of salvation that Christ came to teach."

"I see; but the term *God* may be vague. Some people dignify nature with that name, others law, others a sort of an exalted man."

"Well, we believe in a personal God; an unchangeable God, who is perfect in all his attributes and always has been so. We do not believe in the God that is described by one of your most venerable and popular creeds as being 'without body, parts, or passion,'—described by one theologian as having his 'center everywhere and his circumference nowhere.' In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God created man in his 'own image.' We are also told that Christ was made in the express image of the Father. These passages mean what they say or they do not mean anything."

"Do you regard faith as a gift?" queried Luther; "or is it something that we must exercise of ourselves?"

"That's what I want to know," whispered Donald to Minnie. "Must a man have faith whether he can or not, and be—er—beg your pardon—condemned if he don't?"

"Faith may be a gift, yes," replied the elder; "it is so named in one place. Yet the individual may cultivate it himself. The gospel requirements are reasonable. They appeal to man's intelligence. No one can deny that an obedience to them will make men happier and better. As one studies them and obeys them he receives an assurance from God that strengthens his faith. The promise is definitely made, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.' (John 7:17.) Do not lose sight of that promise. God requires no man to have a faith that is not based on evidence. The trouble is that people often refuse to consider the only means by which this evidence can be received."

Presently, after questions and answers had passed back and forth for an hour, the group fell silent, and Elder Pratt prepared to go. A parting word he left, however:

"The preacher always has an 'in conclusion,' " he remarked; "and in conclusion let me say that great blessings followed faith in days gone by. I believe that just as great blessings will follow as great faith now. Christ himself said, 'These signs shall follow them that believe' (Mark 16:17). Men were healed and blessed in various ways, when they had sufficient faith, and when in their individual cases the thing sought was not contrary to God's will; why should not the same be true to-day?"

"Of repentance from dead works."

"What surprises me," remarked Elder Pratt, when the "conclave" was assembled Monday evening, "is that you do not begin with an attack on the character of Joseph Smith; we are so accustomed to that, as a starter, that I hardly know how to proceed without it."

"I may get to that later on," answered Luther. "I think that one way to judge of his character is to learn what he taught. If I find that taught which is false or degrading, I will attack him quick enough; if I find only good, I shall be slow to believe the stories I have heard against him. I remember one time reading a history by Bancroft, who is considered a reliable historian, and I recall that he said that most of the books written about the man were sensational and unreliable, written to get gain; I have been rather cautious about believing all that I have read since then."

"Yes, I think some of those writers have some things to repent of. They are like some popular lecturers who call him a money-digger, and all in the world they are after in lecturing against him is money. I would rather get my money by digging than by slandering a dead man. But let us get to our subject. The doctrine of repentance is generally accepted by all church members, and is considered a good 'orthodox' doctrine, so perhaps we have little to discuss that will be new to you."

"Perhaps not; but let us get your point of view."

"Well, so far as I am concerned, I should define repentance as being a godly sorrow, so defined by

Paul in 2 Corinthians 7: 9, 10. I should say that it is such a sorrow as one feels who begins to have faith in God, sees the need of living a good, wholesome life, and consequently regrets past follies and mistakes. You see it comes along naturally, in its order."

"Yes, but what evidence can one give of repentance?"

"I should say," replied the elder, "that restitution would be one evidence. In Luke 19: 8, we read concerning Zaccheus, that if he took anything from another, unjustly, he made it a point to return four-fold. That was a pretty liberal evidence of repentance. His godly sorrow amounted to something. He was not like some, who are said to repent, when they have been found in the wrong; they are sorry—that they got caught."

"I had such a neighbor once," said McBernie; "he repented in my corn-crib."

"Repentance," the elder went on, after the conclave had ceased to smile, "may be said to include both ceasing to do evil and learning to do good. If it does not include both, mere professions of sorrow or of faith do not amount to much. You may have noticed that though we value the principle of faith, we take no stock in the answer sometimes given to repentant sinners, who want to know what they shall do, and are told, 'Simply believe, that is all.' There is a great deal outlined in the Scriptures for us to *do*; and, if we really have faith, we will go on and do whatever is commanded. Jesus said, 'He that hath my commandments, and *keepeth* them, he it is that loveth me.'" (John 14: 21.)

"Of the doctrine of baptisms."

Tuesday evening came on with wind and rain. Water descended in torrents. Elder Pratt fought his way to the old store building, and lighted the lamps; but no one came to hear him preach. The hour of meeting passed. The storm had somewhat subsided, though a steady drizzle was still falling. He bethought himself of his appointment at the Luther home, and, ever methodical and faithful in his work, turned his steps thither. He was welcomed with surprise, yet heartily, for his quiet, gentlemanly conduct had created a favorable impression.

McBernie, on some pretext, had braved the weather and was present. Donald dropped in a little later, "to look after father," he explained. "Very well," declared the old gentleman, slipping into the coveted chair at Minnie's side, "I doubt not I'll bear watching."

"It's a fine night," he said, addressing her, with the air of canvassing some secret known only to the two, "for the parsons to talk baptism. They can have a choice, sprinkling, pouring, or immersion."

"Hush," she responded, "I am surprised at such a flippant remark from a man of your age."

The two "parsons" had already settled themselves, the elder steaming cheerily by the fire that had been kindled, the Bible on his knee.

"Baptism," he began, "is the third principle to engage our attention. One who begins to have faith and to repent appreciates the force of the language found in Isaiah 1: 16, 'Wash you, make you clean;

put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil.' To such an one the message comes as it came to Paul, 'Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' I read from Acts 22:16."

"I take it," said Luther, "that, with me, you believe in baptism by immersion?"

"We certainly do. Christ was evidently so baptized in Jordan; we are not greater than he. Moreover, in Romans, the sixth chapter, our baptism is expressly spoken of as a burial. Call it only a type, if you will; even if it were nothing more, God has a right to say what the type shall be. He chooses to typify the burial of his Son by our immersion in water."

"You intimate that it is more than a type," said Luther. "Let me ask you what baptism really is for. Some say it is the answer of a good conscience; some an outward sign of an inward grace, etc."

"The answer is clear and plain," replied Elder Pratt; "baptism is for the remission of sins. How the creed-makers overlooked that fact is a mystery. 'Tis God's province to command, ours to obey. Let me read two passages that will show what baptism is for: 'Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.'—Acts 2:38, 39. Again: 'And now why tarriest thou?

arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'—Acts 22: 16."

"One more question; do you baptize little children?"

"No. Baptism is for the remission of sins. How can little children need baptism, when Christ said that of such was the kingdom of heaven? Instead, we take little children in our arms and bless them, as we read that Christ did."

"One more question; we read of 'one Lord, one faith, and one baptism;' some say that this one baptism is the baptism of water and not of the Holy Spirit, others the reverse; what say you?"

"Paul," replied the elder, "speaks of his outer man and of his inner man. How many Pauls were there?"

"Evidently only one; more the pity."

"Certainly!" said Elder Pratt. "The body and the spirit constitute one perfect man; the baptism of the water and of the Spirit constitute one complete baptism. Jesus answers your question in the third chapter of John: 'Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be *born of water and of the Spirit*, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.' "

"And of laying on of hands."

"I am interested in the subject for to-night," declared Sidney Luther, when the conclave had assembled Wednesday evening. I have never heard it discussed."

"That is true," replied the elder. "I have never heard a sermon from a so-called orthodox pulpit on

the subject; yet I have read to you where it is plainly stated as one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ. As such it must be important. In the first place, the ministry of old imposed hands for the conferring of the Holy Ghost."

"Do you mean," said Luther, "that even as the ministry observed an ordinance at the birth of the water, they did likewise at the birth of the Spirit? Can you cite me to any occurrence in Bible history where such a procedure was observed?"

"Certainly, several. I will read two: 'Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then *laid they their hands on them*, and they received the Holy Ghost.'—Acts 8: 14-17. 'When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had *laid his hands* upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.'—Acts 19: 5-7."

"Was it practiced for any other purposes?" asked Luther.

"Yes," replied the elder; "for instance, in ordaining men to the ministry. I cite you to one of several instances, recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Acts, second and third verses, 'As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have

called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and *laid their hands on them*, they sent them away.'

"The ordinance was also observed for the healing of the sick. Jesus himself practiced it, as you will see by reading the fortieth verse of the fourth chapter of Luke: 'Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he *laid his hands* on every one of them, and healed them.'

"Also Mark 6: 5, 'And he could there do no mighty work, save that he *laid his hands upon a few sick folk*, and healed them.'

"The apostles also observed the ordinance. Permit me to read the eighth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Acts. 'And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and *laid his hands on him*, and healed him. So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed.'

"Some might argue that the right and power to observe this ordinance was limited to the twelve apostles; but such was not the case, for others also observed this ordinance. Read Acts 9:17: 'And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and *putting his hands on him* said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.' "

At this juncture McBernie broke in upon the debate, "What think ye," said he, "was the special significance attaching to the laying on of hands?"

Baptism, we may say, represents burial,—the burial of our Savior. Now what think ye the laying on of hands might represent?"

Elder Pratt glanced keenly at the old man, but, being somewhat skilled in reading human nature, held his peace, knowing that McBernie had his own answer in mind.

The others wrestled with the problem for a time, Luther suggesting that the act of imposing hands signified authority. "Very good, very good," said the old man; "but let me give you a thought. You may be surprised that I have given this study, but I have followed your talk closely, and I think there is much in it. Let me read now."

He reached forth his hand, secured Elder Pratt's Bible, and returned to Habakkuk, the third chapter, and read the third and fourth verses, "'God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.'

"I thinket that the laying on of hands signifies power as well as authority," declared McBernie. "It is said here that the hiding of God's power was in his hand. So it is with man; notice now, in all that he does, his power is applied to things by way of his hands. An architect may have the design in mind, but he is powerless till he lays hand to his pencil. Carpenters study the design, but the building takes no form till men lay hand to bricks and timbers. Now, the elder has shown us how God gave to his

servants power over sickness and over unclean spirits. I thinket 'twas so expressed by the laying on of their hands. Preachers to-day say that such power is no longer given to them; no wonder they have stopet preaching the laying on of hands."

"I would like to ask," said Luther, "if Jesus himself ever plainly authorized men to impose hands for the healing of the sick, or for other purposes."

"Yes; just a moment ago I cited you to the case of Ananias, who said plainly that Jesus 'sent' him to lay hands on Paul that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Also, in his last great commission, as you will find by reading the eighteenth verse of the sixteenth chapter of Mark, he said of his disciples, 'They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.' Whatever men may argue now, those who stood next to Jesus did not think that this power was limited to the twelve apostles, because James left this perpetual injunction on record, in the fifth chapter of his epistle: 'Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.'"

At the precise moment when the conclave broke up for the night, Deacon and Mrs. Deacon Hardpack were engaged in their evening devotions. The deacon was reading from the fourth chapter of Ephesians: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors

and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

He closed the book with a vicious suddenness, and sprang up and began pacing back and forth in the little kitchen.

"Why, Jonas! what in the world has come over ye?" quavered his good old wife, in shocked surprise.

"It's this 'ere Latter Day Saint business," snarled the old man. "I wish I had never heered 'em preach at all. My Bible don't read like it used ter do. No matter where I open it, I hit some of their doctrine. Last night, it was about the sick sendin' for the elders. Night afore, it was the angel flyin' in the midst of heaven. To-night, it's apostles and prophets."

"Never mind, Jonas," soothed the old lady, "you know, as Mrs. Barker says, we have apostles and prophets. 'Our church,' says she, 'is built on 'em.'"

The old man halted a moment, and peered at her from under his bushy brows, "Yes, we've got 'em—dead ones! Why not have a dead pastor? Tell me that. A tombstone's a right smart cheaper than a salary."

"Mrs. Barker says, too," soothed the old lady again, "that it says 'God gave apostles to some, and pastors to some.' Mrs. Barker says he gave some to one church an' some to another."

"Well, then," retorted the old man, "he must a thought a lot of the Latter Day Saints. He give them the whole outfit, apostles and all, an' we only got pastors and evangelists."

The good wife laid a fluttering hand on his arm. "Jonas, if they're right, why not join 'em? You know our church says, 'Where the Bible speaks we speak.'"

"They're *not* right," flared the contrary old deacon, "they ain't got a *thing* that *we* ain't got."

"Of the resurrection of the dead."

A solemn and earnest spirit had settled over the little conclave. The Thursday evening session was opened with prayer, and closed with singing and prayer.

"The subject of the resurrection is one that interests all men," began the elder. "Centuries ago, Job asked the question, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' It is a question that deals with the beyond, and we can get the answer by revelation only."

"That is what we wish," replied Luther. "We wish to know if the Scriptures teach a literal resurrection of the dead."

"Do you believe that Christ actually arose from the dead, with a real, though glorified body?" asked Elder Pratt.

"Yes," answered Luther.

"Well, you know the statement, found in 1 Corinthians, 15:20, that Christ became 'the first fruits or them that slept'; others, then, are to follow him

in the resurrection. Also, you remember the statement that 'as in Adam all died so in Christ shall all be made alive.' Through the wiles of Satan, physical as well as spiritual death came into the world. If Christ does not conquer both, and restore man, body and spirit, to his former estate, or higher, he will not have won a complete victory over Satan; and we are told that he came into the world for the express purpose of destroying the *works* of Satan.

"Biblical references to support my view are so numerous that I can not read them all; but I will read two from the Old Testament and two from the New Testament. First I will read Job 19: 25, 26, 'For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.' You see Job got the answer to his question.

"Now I read from Isaiah 26: 19, 'Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

"This earth," cried the elder, deeply moved, "was not intended for a graveyard. Some day she will hear the trump, and, realizing her mission, will cast out the dead and become the home and not the cemetery of men.

"But now turn to the New Testament, and we will read from Luke 14: 14: 'And thou shalt be blessed; for they can not recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.'

“Next let us read 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-17: ‘But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.’

“Here we find mention made of the first resurrection, and gather the idea that there are at least two. In the twentieth chapter of Revelation, the first resurrection is again mentioned as the ‘resurrection of the just.’ There, as in the passage just read, it is stated that this resurrection is to occur at the coming of Christ; for the Bible clearly teaches the literal second coming of Christ, who the angels said was to come in like manner as he went away, that is, personally, literally, clothed with glory and power. This twentieth chapter of Revelation states that after their resurrection the ‘just’ shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years, the great millennial reign, when Satan shall be bound; ‘but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.’ This seems to make the order of the

resurrections plain and easily understood. It gives us a comprehensive view of the great and far-reaching work of our Savior."

Standing, the little congregation sang:

"The saints shall wear robes as the lilies,
When Jesus returning again,
Shall bring back the rose to the valleys,
And plant the fruit trees on the plain."

"And of eternal judgment."

Donald and Minnie were leaning upon the front gate of the Luther home; the air was balmy and the sun shone brightly, yet he had the manner of sheltering her from storms and tempests. Finally, when Mrs. Luther had three times called Minnie to supper, Donald prepared to depart.

"I think I'll not be over to-night," he remarked; "this subject of eternal judgment sort of stands me off. It makes me think of evenings when I had played truant, and was coming home to settle with father."

"But," laughed Minnie, "there is another side to the question. When you had been good all day, you rather liked to come home to your father's house, did you not? And, anyway, we know that in the beyond we will all get justice."

"Now, perhaps that's what I don't like. I have heard of one man who was on trial, and the lawyer, wishing to hearten him up a bit, assured him that he would get justice. He replied that that was what was worrying him."

"Minnie smiled at the anecdote, but, not to be diverted said, "Well, why not live all the time so that we will not be afraid of the judgment?"

Donald leaned a little nearer, and whispered, "I believe it would be easy, if I could always have the right kind of company."

If there was a hidden meaning in the answer, the young man gained nothing, for the next moment he had no company.

Nevertheless, Donald was present at the evening session.

"Do you understand," began Sidney Luther, by way of opening the conversation of the evening, "that there is to be a day of general judgment of all men?"

"Certainly; in Acts 17:31, we read, 'He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.' There are special dispensations and preliminary judgments in individual cases, but there is a day appointed to judge all men. It is quite fully described in the twentieth chapter of Revelation. There we learn that this final judgment is to follow the second resurrection. It is to be so complete and universal, that the Revelator describes it thus: 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell

delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.'

"Here in this life," said the elder, "men are brought before the judgment bar, and, if guilty, they are punished. We do not hear of men being tried and rewarded for good deeds. But the judgment day here spoken of will bring not only punishments but rewards. Notice, also, that it is plainly said that men shall be judged *according to their works*, not alone according to their professions of faith and love, a thought that is repeated in Matthew 16: 27.

"How can that be, think ye?" broke in McBernie, "when there are only two places; one of reward and one of punishment? There are all kinds of lives, from the worst up to the best."

"Perhaps," answered Elder Pratt, "you have held the orthodox idea of heaven and hell to be the only idea. But I think that you will find that God has a variety of punishments to fit all offenses, and a reward to suit each individual case."

"That may well be," said McBernie; "give us the scripture, man."

"Well, I'll read from the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians: 'All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from an-

other star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.'

"Here," went on the elder, "we have at least three glories mentioned, the glory of the sun, the glory of moon, and the glory of the stars, and the statement that it shall be like that in the resurrection, that the lesser glories that God shall bestow shall differ as the stars differ in splendor,

"There will also be degrees of punishment, as is shown by the language found in Matthew 11: 21-24, where Christ is speaking to Bethsaida and Chorazin, and tells them that it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for them."

"I'll confess," said Luther, "that such a presentation of the final judgment shows the justice and wisdom of God in a far better light than we have been accustomed to think when listening to some sermons on the subject."

"What else could be true?" cried the elder, springing to his feet in his earnestness. "Let me use an illustration. We will say that we have a line of men reaching across this room. They stand shoulder to shoulder. The meanest man that ever lived stands at the foot of the line. They are graded on up until the best man that ever lived heads the line. Now tell me where I can put my hand down in this line, and say that all on this side shall go to a never-ending hell, and that all on that side shall go to eternal bliss? All the way along, the men are graded up, scarcely an inch apart, morally. Now, that is the proposition that God faces, and only his

wisdom can solve it. He finds all classes, from the worst to the best. Will he put his hand down here, and say, 'This man, who has escaped hell by the thickness of my hand, shall go to heaven and share an eternal glory,' equally with the best man that ever lived, who heads the line? Will he say, 'This other man, on the other side, who has missed heaven by the thickness of my hand, shall go to hell and suffer for ever,' equally with the worst man that ever lived? No! There would be men there with manhood enough to stand up and protest against such a judgment. We do better here. We try to make the punishment fit the crime, even in our police courts. We try, even in our schools, to give credits that are deserved. God is not less just than man, and he will reward or punish according to the deserts of each individual. What concerns us most, though, is to secure the highest reward; and it can be obtained only through the atonement of our Savior and a life of righteous obedience to his gospel. Such an idea of the final judgment holds out an incentive to live and to work; no mere nominal church membership will suffice. What a comfort to those who really serve God! They do not look forward in fear toward the day when they shall stand before God! But oh, what an ordeal awaits the unfaithful, who shall stand stripped to the soul before God, and realize that all his judgments are just!"

The elder seated himself, and the talk ran on, in a subdued, eager way, for a long time.

Finally the little assembly arose, and Sidney Luther prayed, "Our Father, we implore thy divine

guidance. We have met here and have canvassed some subjects pertaining to thy gospel. So far as we can see, the doctrines that this man has presented are in harmony with thy word. They seem designed to take men from the dawn of faith even to the very judgment day. If they are indeed true, confirm them to us unmistakably. If he is indeed a servant of thine, and comes with the restored gospel, show it to us so that we may know. And, Lord, if we do learn that his message is true, we do pledge ourselves to accept it at whatever cost. Amen."

CHAPTER 6.

STAND FROM UNDER.

SIDNEY LUTHER did not see Elder Pratt again until Sunday morning, on which occasion he escorted the elder up the aisle of the old union church and proffered him a seat on the stand.

As Elder Pratt glanced over the congregation, he beheld a variety of expression,—expressions that may be imagined, but can not be described. Those who did not know Mrs. Barker, and consequently were unaware of her reputation of sanctity, might have imagined that she was angry. Mr. E. E. Miller sat stiffly in his accustomed place, his pale face paler than usual, his shaven upper lip curled contemptuously, and a baleful light in his hawklike eyes. Some countenances expressed blank astonishment;

clearly the puzzled owners thought that the pastor was insane. Others, who had attended the elder's meetings regularly, saw nothing to cause undue astonishment. Why should not the elder be asked to preach in the old union church? It was not the first time that the pastor had invited other ministers to preach from his pulpit.

During the past week, the tongue of gossip had been busy with the name of Sidney Luther, as those could testify who had conversed with Mrs. Barker or with Mr. E. E. Miller. It was declared that he was about to turn traitor and ally himself with the Latter Day Saints. His present course seemed to confirm the rumor. But more dark and sinister rumors were afloat. Mr. E. E. Miller had quietly given out that he had it direct from the Reverend J. Albert Hubbard that Sidney Luther had resigned his former pastorate under a cloud. The old prejudice that had existed in certain quarters was fanned into a fresh glow.

Miss Halloway and Ephraim Wilson refused to sing. Miss Halloway considered it "sacrilegious" to sing for a Latter Day Saint preacher; and Ephraim, who had gone back to his uncertain tenor, thought whatever Miss Halloway thought. However, this defection did not ruin the musical part of the services; Ephraim was no Caruso. In fact, though tall and dignified, he had not impressed Mentone. It was the general consensus of opinion that Ephraim would never "set the world on fire"; Norman Barker considered that to be a good thing in one way, "Because," declared he, "ef he did, he wouldn't nohow

know enough to put it out." But, to Miss Halloway, he was a man; he represented the first and last opportunity—she embraced the opportunity.

In due time, Sidney Luther "had the pleasure" of introducing Elder Phineas Pratt, of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, as the speaker.

In a friendly, courteous, yet plain and unflinching manner, the elder proceeded to expound the doctrines of his church. He followed with an account of the angel's visit to Joseph Smith and the organization and growth of the church. He read and explained those prophecies found in the Bible, so clearly anticipating the coming forth of the latter-day work. He closed with these words, "I have shown you, from the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah, how Lebanon was to become a fruitful field, and how, before that event, a sealed book was to be delivered to one who was unlearned, and a marvelous work was to be done. The Book of Mormon was delivered to an unlearned man, the gospel was restored, and the church was organized after the old pattern, all in fulfillment of this prophecy. At a date later than the work of Joseph Smith, the prophecy regarding Lebanon began to be fulfilled, as a divine confirmation.

"One proof that I submit is this: A so-called prophetic conference, attended by representatives of the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches, met in Chicago, in July, 1895. I read from their findings, as reported in the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, 'Another sign is the return of the Jews to Palestine. There are more of them there now than there were

after the return from the Babylonian captivity. . . . A sign which is undeniably miraculous, too, is that Palestine is again becoming fruitful, after years of desolation, during which scarcely anything would grow. It was under a curse and the curse is being lifted.'

"I am glad that these churches are on record, because they took part in the revival meeting that stirred Joseph Smith to seek the Lord and receive the revelation that was at that time branded as coming from the Devil. He predicted these things regarding the land of Jerusalem years before they occurred, and was called an impostor; these men mention them after they have happened, and they are called a 'prophetic' conference.

"Why should you think the message that we present strange? Alexander Campbell is on record in the 'Christian System' as saying, that 'some *new revelation* or some new development of the revelation of God must be made before the hopes and expectations of all true Christians can be realized or Christianity can save and reform the nations of this world. We want the *old gospel back*, and sustained by the *ancient order of things*.' Roger Williams declared, 'I conceive that the apostasy of anti-Christ has so far corrupted all, that there can be no recovery out of that apostasy till Christ shall send forth new apostles to plant churches anew.' I read from 'Struggles and Triumphs of Religious Liberty.' John Wesley declared that the signs of the time indicated that God was about to arise 'to maintain his own cause and set up his own kingdom.'"

Some of the followers of these renowned reformers stirred uneasily. These quotations did not agree with the idea that the day of revelation and miracle had ended long, long ago. To find the illustrious Wesley, Campbell, and Williams hand in glove with Elder Phineas Pratt, of the Latter Day Saints' Church, was a surprise. Norman Barker could not forbear giving his wife a sly nudge; one of these men was her peerless reformer.

The congregation sang, "Lead, kindly light," and in certain quarters the "encircling gloom" reigned profound.

Before he dismissed the meeting, Sidney Luther made a few quiet remarks. He said, "Elder Pratt has presented some ideas that are worthy of your careful consideration. If they are true, you want to know it; and I trust you will be willing to accept them. If they are false, you ought to have light enough to detect that fact and reject them. I warned you, when I took this charge, that I should hold myself ready to accept truth, let it come from where it might. I realize that this is a day when all that can be shaken will be shaken. If our structure is faulty, and can be shaken, my advice to you is to stand from under."

Deacon and Mrs. Deacon Hardpack walked down the street together—almost together—the good old lady found it difficult to maintain her hold upon the arm of her irate spouse.

"I can't keep away from that there doctrine, anywhere I go," complained the old man, his cane

rapping time to his words; "even in our own church!"

"Never mind, Jonas," soothed the good old lady, "Bro. Luther, or Bro. E. E. Miller, or somebody'll reply to him."

The old man stopped and scowled up at her, "They ain't nairy one *can* reply to him," he retorted.

CHAPTER 7.

UNDER THE MAPLE-TREES.

MINNIE hastened home to prepare the noon-day meal, assisted by Donald, who insisted on paring the potatoes,—with vast extravagance as regards thickness of parings.

He surveyed the finished product with a critical eye. "I'm afraid," he declared, "that I'll never again be able to look an honest potato in the eye." A little later he added, inconsequentially, "I think that I'll be a preacher, when I grow up; they seem to have a good time, trying to please everybody."

"I don't know," began Minnie, "I one time made a vow never to—" she stopped suddenly, "Mercy, my biscuits are burning!"

"What was it you vowed?" queried Donald, when the biscuits were again made comfortable.

"I've forgotten," she replied.

But he did not notice; he was lost in a dreamy contemplation of Minnie as a housekeeper.

Sidney Luther and his wife loitered by the way. Adjoining the old union church there was a tract of land owned by McBernie. A part of it the church held by perpetual lease as a cemetery; a part of it was shaded with fine old maple-trees, in whose leafy canopy the birds nested. Sunday-school picnics were sometimes held in this little park; and at times the congregation had assembled there for basket-meetings, and Luther had preached to them.

In the shadow of these trees, the minister and his wife wandered, hand in hand, like little children. Always in perfect accord, an intuitive understanding had grown up between them, so that each often sensed the thought in the other's mind ere it was uttered. Presently the soft voice of Rose Luther broke the silence, "What is it, Sidney?"

The husband heaved a deep sigh, and squared his shoulders, "Well, it's simply this: We have come to the point where we must make a decision!"

"I am ready," responded the low voice.

"The truth has come to us;" the husband went on, "the very thing I have long searched for. A messenger from the great God has found us. I know now that there is one church that is in perfect accord with the biblical pattern. I have studied and prayed, and I have received an evidence which I can not doubt. I have pledged myself to accept this message if I should find it true. But how can I ask you to make another sacrifice!"

The little hand tightened its grasp upon the big fingers of the husband. Tears sprang to the tender, uplifted eyes of Rose Luther. "Sacrifice! It is no

sacrifice," she murmured, "I, too, am a believer. We can not call it a sacrifice when the goodness of a kind Father sends that which we have long prayed for. Let us sell all that we have, and secure this great treasure."

The heavens, beholding the tender love of a true man and a faithful woman, devoted to the service of God, rejoiced; and the sun, glinting down through maple-boughs, showered them with a golden benediction.

When the two reached home, Minnie was busy in the kitchen, while Donald was innocently reading in the parlor. Apparently he was absorbed, though Rose Luther, with a woman's curiosity, wondered how he could read with the book bottom upward. Little Viola, observing but not always observed, informed the assembled company that Donald had "buried the potato peeling in the garden."

Unknown to Luther, a select meeting of "the pillars" was held at the home of Mr. E. E. Miller, at three o'clock of that afternoon. Luther was detained by one of his parishioners, purposely, perhaps, until almost time for the evening service. In the meantime, little groups of people approached the old union church, found the doors closed, read a notice tacked thereon, and wonderingly took their departure or loitered near to watch developments.

When Luther hastened to his service, through the early twilight, he, too, found the door locked. Stooping down, he read, "No services to-night! Revival services next week! By order of the trustees.—Mr. E. E. Miller."

Mrs. Deacon Hardpack was preparing for bed. The strings of her red flannel nightcap were tied under her chin (she never changed to the white until July 15). The deacon was pottering around the kitchen stove, "fixin' the fire for mornin'."

"Come, Jonas," pleaded the old lady, "read a chapter afore we go to bed."

"Naw!" grunted the deacon.

"Ain't you never goin' to read no more?"

"Naw! not 'til them Latter Day Saints git out 'o town, an' I've hed time to fergit all they ever preached."

"Now, Jonas, don't be foolish. Come'n read—somethin' that you know is all right."

The old man straightened his bent back as much as he could, and glared at her, "Quit pesterin' me, will ye? They ain't *none* of it that's all right, any more. You go on to bed an' leave me alone."

Dabbing mournfully at her eyes, the good old lady sought her couch, only kneeling long enough to pray, "Lord, save Jonas! *I* can't do nothing with him."

Silence followed. Presently the old deacon stuck his head in at the bedroom door. "Maw! maw!" he called, "where's my specks? Hev you seen my specks?"

His wife sat up in bed and surveyed him. "Land sakes, Jonas," she cried, "you've got 'em on!"

The deacon lifted his hand to confirm the report that his ears had heard, and disappeared.

A long silence followed. The old lady dozed off, then sat up with a start. It seemed that half the

night had gone. "Jonas, Jonas," she called, "air you ever comin' to bed?"

"In a minit, maw," responded the voice from the other room.

She subsided, and the affair repeated itself. This time, however, she got up and came to the door to peer forth at him. He heard her hard little heels coming on the bare floor, thump, thump, and got up hastily. He had been reading the Bible, Isaiah 29.

CHAPTER 8.

BAPTISM: PRAYER-SERVICE.

A HALF MILE north of Mentone ran a little gravel-bottomed creek; in summer-time, merely a series of opalescent pools strung on a silver thread. One of these pools, overhung with maples and alders, Minnie had called the Pool of Siloam.

In the Pool of Siloam, Sidney Luther, his wife, Arthur, and several others who had attended Elder Pratt's meetings, were baptized, Tuesday afternoon.

Prayer and confirmation services were held at the Luther home in the evening. The little house was crowded with a happy, subdued company. Donald, abstracted and thoughtful, formed one of the number.

After the opening exercises, Elder Pratt proceeded to confirm those who had been baptized. Coming

to Sidney Luther, last of all, he placed his hands upon his head, and, with a voice trembling with emotion and with tears running down his cheeks, he said, "Sidney, I place my hands upon your head and confirm you a member of the Church of Jesus Christ, known among men as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. In the Master's name, I say unto you, Receive ye the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now, O God, our heavenly Father, I commit our brother into thy care. May he be watched over and blessed. May there be a little circle of light around about him, through which no evil power can break to do him any permanent harm. May his home be a home of peace and light, typifying, as nearly as possible, his idea of heaven. May his life be one of service, and all the glory shall be thine. Amen."

The congregation kneeled, and several prayers were offered. These were followed by testimonies. Sidney Luther, seated in the congregation, became aware of a feeling that he had not before experienced. It was as though some great unseen presence were brooding over the audience.

The presiding elder glanced up quickly, as though aware of the spiritual atmosphere, and quietly opened his Bible and read, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to an-

other the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

With face aglow, one sister struck up a hymn, one recently learned,

"The Spirit of God like a fire is burning;
The latter-day glory begins to come forth;
The visions and blessings of old are returning;
The angels are coming to visit the earth."

At its close, the elder arose, and stepping forward a pace, said, in a quiet yet penetrating voice, "Thus saith the Spirit: Sidney Luther, my servant, you are loved of me because of the integrity of your heart. You have loved the truth, and have sought after it; and I have guided you hitherto, and will guide you. Verily, I say unto you, you are called to preach my gospel. Your voice shall be heard in many places. Multitudes shall listen to your counsel. You shall stand high in the church and kingdom of God. Slander and persecution shall speedily come upon you, for Satan even now is stirring the hearts of the people against you. You shall suffer violence because of me. But be not troubled because of that; the servant is not greater than the Master; they hated me without a cause, and they hate you without a cause. But I will be with you to preserve you. Also, it is my will that my servant, Donald McBernie, shall accept this gospel; and if he continue faithful, he shall be ordained an elder, and shall watch over the little flock that shall be raised up in this place."

Luther, watching the man intently, knew him,

though how he could not tell, to be truly a man of God, and knew that his words were true.

Scarcely was he seated from delivering his prophecy, when Rose Luther stood upon her feet and began to speak. Her delicate features seemed transparent, as though illuminated by some inner light. Her soft voice, trembling like a silver wire burdened with heavy jewels, was uttering words in a language unknown to them.

The sister who had started the new hymn arose and gave the interpretation, "Verily, thus saith the Lord: If those who have united with the church in this place will be faithful in all things, I will give them the victory. An open door is set before my people in this place, and if they will enter in and occupy, so shall they be established; and from time to time others shall be added to their numbers. Be not fearful if persecutions assail you; you may be harrassed, but you shall not be destroyed."

At nine o'clock the meeting closed, Elder Pratt leading in singing the closing hymn:

"A calm and gentle quiet reigns to-night,
There's not a cloud upon a single brow;
And every heart is thrilling with delight,
While peace is brooding sweetly o'er us now.

"And every bosom feels the thrilling touch
Of the Spirit, filling them with holy fire;
The precious boon for which we pray so much,
In answer to that earnest heart's desire.

"We thank the Lord that we have lived to see
The good he bringeth in the latter day;
Our earnest prayer to him shall ever be,
To keep our feet within the narrow way.

"For we have walked in darkness hitherto,
Or had but just a little ray of light;
But now the blessings fall as morning dew,
And truth is shining as the morning bright."

Indeed, a calm and gentle quiet of spiritual peace reigned over the little assembly; in Christ they had rest, but in the world, days of persecution and tumult awaited them.

CHAPTER 9.

THE ADVENT OF A RIVAL REVIVAL.

THE secret session at the home of Mr. E. E. Miller had settled several things: First, that Sidney Luther should never occupy the new parsonage; second, that the old union church should not again be desecrated; third, that an evangelist should be secured to hold services in opposition to Elder Pratt. In fact, it developed that Mr. E. E. Miller had already held correspondence with one who waited only a word to come like an angel of deliverance.

During Monday, handbills began to appear in the store windows. Tuesday afternoon, after the baptism, McBernie, ever alert, casually followed Mr. E. E. Miller to the depot. The incoming train bore the great revivalist; and when that individual stepped from the rear coach, McBernie gave a real start of surprise. It was none other than the Reverend J. Albert Hubbard, a little more portly, but

the same bland, smooth, "professional" clergyman of old.

As a successor to Sidney Luther, in the Walnut Street Church, he had been a failure. The contrast had been too severe. His "dry bones" were too much for an audience that had been accustomed to Luther's sermons. This fact had rankled in his breast. The frequency with which his parishioners had quoted Luther, referring to what "Bro. Luther" would do or say, under this or that condition, had deepened his hatred toward the innocent object of his wrath.

Resigning the pastorate of the Walnut Street Church, after it had fallen to pieces on his hands, he had taken up revival work. He was smitten with a desire to be a disciple of Torrey or Sunday. He had adopted certain sensational methods that had secured him a degree of success as a traveling evangelist. He had also added, as a side line, a lecture on "Mormonism." These lectures paid well, the chief inducement to men of his class; they brought a cash consideration in advance. It was his policy to prevent any reply, by methods that will appear later. His motto was, "No back talk."

After Norman Barker had listened to him a few evenings, he came to Sidney Luther and Elder Pratt in deep disgust, taking care that Mrs. Barker was ignorant of his visit.

"That feller," he declared, "is after the money there is in it. He talks to live. I'll swow he makes me think o' Deacon Hardpack's old donkey, that brays all the time, but mostly for fodder. I tackled

the old man one time about that there donkey." Barker cheered up a little at the recollection of the encounter. "'Twas in the post-office, before a lot o' people. I asked him what he kept th' old beast fer. The old feller looked up at me, frum under that shock of eyebrows, in the way he has, and said, 'I think a heap sight more of sum brayers than I dew of some Barkers.' Haw, haw, haw!"

CHAPTER 10.

A DIVIDED HOUSE.

REVEREND J. ALBERT HUBBARD soon made his presence felt. With the assistance of Mrs. Barker and Mr. E. E. Miller, he succeeded in stirring up a bitter and malignant prejudice against Sidney Luther and Elder Pratt and their little following. The feeling was especially intense against Luther, who was regarded as a traitor. Black defamations of his character were assiduously circulated.

The Mentone *Clarion* came out on Wednesday, containing a three-column article on the "Mormon Menace," by Reverend Hubbard. Sidney Luther was simply astonished that so much ridicule, misrepresentation, evasion, and enmity could be condensed into three columns. Elder Pratt was more experienced.

Norman Barker met them on the street the day of its appearance, and, stopping his team, beckoned

them to the side of his dray. "It's a dirty deal the're givin' you," he complained. "Can't something be done about it?"

"I'm afraid not," replied Elder Pratt. "We seldom get a fair chance to reply to these articles; and in this case, Mr. E. E. Miller has an interest in the paper."

"I'll tell you," persisted Barker, "I know young Davidson, the editor. He's a pretty square feller. Let's go up an' see him. I'll drop in right off, an' you come on a little later. I ain't ashamed of you, but if Mrs. Barker'd see me along with you, I wouldn't sleep none to-night."

"Well, if you think it worth while, we'll go up; I'll go and get a few books that we may need," replied Elder Pratt.

When Luther and Elder Pratt entered the *Clarion* office, they found Barker engaged in conversation with the editor. Barker was pounding the desk with his fist and bellowing in a subdued tone. Davidson sat with hands thrust deeply into his pockets, his long legs spread out over the paper-littered floor of the sanctum. Davidson had a good eye, a square jaw, and a heavy head of hair that evidently was not on speaking terms with any comb in town.

"Well, gentlemen," he declared, "I have been expecting you all day."

Evidently to try their mettle, he argued with them for a half hour that it was not his duty to give space to a reply.

But at last he got up and spat out of the door, and, returning to his desk and to his former sprawl-

ing attitude, declared, "I told Mr. Barker, before you came in, that you ought to have a square deal. Mr. E. E. Miller owns half of this paper, and he insisted on that article going in; but I own half of it, and I'll see that you have as much space for a reply."

"That's what I call square!" cried Barker. "I ain't at all religious, but this way some church people have of hittin' a man when his hands 're tied makes *me* sick."

The men arose to go, but Davidson put forth a detaining hand, "One thing I want to ask you before you go," he said. "In his article, Reverend Hubbard says that Joseph Smith was the author of the revelation on polygamy, and that it is to be found in the book containing his other revelations. Is that true?"

"No," replied Elder Pratt. "It is true that the people in Utah have inserted a so-called revelation, sanctioning polygamy, in the book containing their version of Joseph Smith's other revelations; but they did so after his death, and, though they attached his name to the revelation, we do not believe that he ever saw the document. Eight years after Joseph Smith's death, Brigham Young publicly proclaimed the doctrine of polygamy, in Salt Lake City, Utah. At that time he brought forth this revelation, stating that he had received it from Joseph Smith prior to his death, and had kept it secret all that time. He said that he did not have the original document, that it had been destroyed by Emma Smith, Joseph's wife; but when this report came to her ears, she

denied ever having seen or destroyed any such paper, and testified that her husband never taught or practiced the doctrine."

"Then this revelation is a posthumous document, and of doubtful origin?"

"Most certainly it is."

"But did Joseph Smith make no statements, regarding the doctrine, that were published during his life, and are known to be authentic, and properly representative of his views?"

"He did; I have here a copy of the *Times and Seasons*, the official church organ, dated February 1, 1844, just a few months before the death of Joseph Smith. It contains a notice that I will read:

"NOTICE.

"As we have lately been credibly informed, that an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, by the name of Hiram Brown, has been preaching polygamy, and other false and corrupt doctrines in the county of Lapeer, state of Michigan.

"This is to notify him and the church in general, that he has been cut off from the church for his iniquity; and he is further notified to appear at the special conference, on the 6th of April next, to make answer to these charges.

"JOSEPH SMITH,

"HYRUM SMITH,

"Presidents of said Church."

"You see that he calls the doctrine false and corrupt; Brigham Young said that it was a God-given

doctrine: you may judge as to who wrote the so-called revelation sanctioning it.

"I see. But what was the law of the church during Joseph Smith's life, in regard to the marriage covenant?"

"The law of the church, as found in section forty-two of the book of Doctrine and Covenants, was, 'Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and none else.'"

"That's plain enough," declared the editor. "Of course I don't indorse all your ideas, but I would like to see you have fair play. Personally, I can't indorse your theories of church organization and doctrine. Changes have come in both, to suit changed conditions."

He picked up a piece of paper and a pencil, and drew a straight mark. "Here," he said, "we trace the course of the church for a few centuries after the death of Christ; then it disappears, during the Dark Ages."

"Pardon the interruption," cried Elder Pratt; "that's a fine illustration. Permit me to complete it." He seized the paper and pencil, and went on, "I draw another line from where the church again appeared, leaving a gap to cover the time of apostasy and darkness. Now, when the church reappears, should it not be the same in form and doctrine as when it disappeared? Otherwise, how do we know that it is indeed the church of Christ? And would it not be necessary for God to direct in the restoration?"

They parted with the best of feeling, and the next

issue of the *Clarion* contained a three-column article from the pen of Elder Pratt. How Davidson settled with Mr. E. E. Miller was never revealed.

That evening, at a little prayer-meeting held in the Luther home, Sidney Luther was ordained an elder. Mentone was not then in organized territory, so far as the church was concerned, and Elder Pratt had decided that as soon as possible he would move forward and organize a branch.

CHAPTER 11.

THE REVEREND J. ALBERT HUBBARD LECTURES ON "MORMONISM."

ENMITY toward the great latter-day work has made some queer bedfellows. One "league," formed a few years ago to fight the work that God did through Joseph Smith, opened its doors to all classes of members, the one lone, solitary, consequently prominent stipulation, being that the incoming member donate financially to the coffers of the "league." "Ho! Christians! infidels! pastors! drunkards! thieves! politicians! millionaires! semi-beggars! whoso will may fling a brick at the head of a Latter Day Saint, providing he will help meet the expenses of our brickyard." In the Hebrew language, nineteen hundred years ago, it might have read, "Ho! Pharisees! publicans! Sadducees! sinners! Essenes! Romans! any one can join our ranks who will help buy Judas and down Jesus!"

So here it was again, in Mentone,—the Reverend J. Albert Hubbard was to lecture in the old union church, Thursday evening, on the subject of “Mormonism,” while Uncle Billy Stivers was lecturing daily on the street-corners on the same subject. Uncle Billy Stivers’ specialties were “old rye” and tirades on “Mormonism”; as one went into Uncle Billy Stivers, the other came out.

Uncle Billy was something of a local celebrity, because of his boast that he had helped to drive the Saints from Missouri and from Illinois; also he was one of that great host of old men who went to school with Joseph Smith as a lad. That school must have been one of the greatest universities ever founded. As a former denizen of the regions around about Zion, Uncle Billy Stivers helped to confirm the statement of the historian Bancroft, that the Saints in Missouri and Illinois were industrially and morally far in advance of their neighbors.

McBernie dealt with the old man, on the day when the *Clarion* came out with Hubbard’s tirade. Uncle Billy was holding forth to a crowd gathered in front of the post-office, a favorite rallying place for the gossips. McBernie listened to him with every evidence of keen enjoyment (he afterward explained that he had a secret but real liking for fiction), and at last broke in, “And ye really went to school with Joseph Smith?”

The weazenened old fire-eater detected a note of incredulity, and his wiry beard trembled defiantly as he answered in the affirmative.

"And how old a man are ye? Older than myself, I take it?"

"I was seventy—— years old last December."

McBernie pondered this a moment. "When ye were born, Joseph Smith was twenty-five years old. And ye went to school with him! Ye were fourteen years old when he died; and ye knew him well, and helpet to drive him from Missouri several years before. Ye were the most precocious lad I ever heard of."

Norman Barker also had a dab at the old man the same day. "Yew was actually associated with Joseph Smith as a boy, and he associated with you. Well, that's a *leetle* the wust thing I ever heered agin Joseph Smith! haw, haw, haw!"

Nevertheless, laugh as they would, Stivers had his part in stirring up that which followed; for, whatever his pretensions were, he was filled with the spirit of mobocracy that had caused trouble in the past; and his ribald talk drew after him a certain following of the baser sort.

Thursday evening came, and the old union church was crowded. All eyes were turned upon Elder Pratt as he entered, accompanied by Sidney Luther, Rose Luther, and McBernie. A silence fell upon the waiting audience; but presently, when they were seated, the buzz began again. Norman and Mrs. Barker came in and took seats as far from them as conveniently possible—Mrs. Barker selecting the seats. Barker looked as melancholy as his big, jolly, red face would permit. Presently, bent old Deacon Hardpack came up the aisle, tapping his cane at

every step, followed by his wife. "Set here, Jonas," she commanded, selecting seats. They were the seats that he had already selected, but at this he changed his mind and took a seat further forward.

Ephraim Wilson and Miss Holloway wended their way into the choir. Miss Holloway sat down, giggled, got up, and sat down again, thus attracting attention to her hat and her escort. Then she glanced around to see if Sidney Luther were present. She confided to Ephraim that she never did like Luther's preaching, but she thought Reverend Hubbard "simply divine."

Reverend Hubbard took his seat at the right of the "sacred" (?) desk; Mr. E. E. Miller seated himself at the left. Uncle Billy Stivers marched up the aisle, claimed and was awarded a seat on the platform, out of deference to his services in "the cause."

A stiff silence followed. Mr. E. E. Miller and Reverend Hubbard exchanged whispers, compared watches, cleared their respective throats, and Mr. E. E. Miller arose and "had the pleasure" of announcing the nature of the meeting and the name of the speaker, after which Reverend J. Albert Hubbard took complete charge of the service. The choir sang "America." It was the Reverend Hubbard's plan to pose all Latter Day Saints as enemies of the Constitution and the flag. An appeal to patriotism was eminently in place in a discussion of religious topics. Mr. E. E. Miller offered prayer, in which he commended the "bold, honest, and self-sacrificing champion of right" to divine favor. The Reverend J. Albert had received fifty dollars in ad-

vance for the lecture, besides one hundred dollars for the week's revival services. Deacon and Mrs. Deacon Hardpack kneeled laboriously when the prayer began, as was their custom; but when reference was made to the self-sacrifice of the evangelist, the old deacon got up and resumed his seat, dropping his cane as he did so.

How shall we paint the lecture that followed? It is impossible. No distinction was made between those in Utah who had gone into various evils, and those of the Reorganization who had embraced a pure faith and lived righteous lives; indeed, the errors of the former were used to blacken the name of the latter. Absolutely no effort was made to meet Elder Pratt's teachings on biblical grounds. The attack was upon private character; the appeal was to prejudice and passion. Ridicule and falsehood were the weapons. The gutters were raked for filth to cast at the name of Joseph Smith. The very mother that bore him, and the wife that loved him, were gone over with the dirty hand of slander. That one should stoop to earn his money in such a way is almost inconceivable.

Sidney Luther's first feeling was one of angry resentment. Then he experienced a feeling of humiliation, and almost a sense of mental crucifixion. But presently the words of the Master came to him, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." The words steadied him and comforted him. "I will confess," he said to Reverend Hubbard, afterwards, "that some

of the things you said caused me a degree of pain, but not so much as they would have caused had they been true."

Reverend J. Albert Hubbard finished his discourse, at last, and announced the closing hymn.

Elder Pratt got up. "Mr. Hubbard," he said, "may I say a few words?"

"No! The congregation will sing the doxology, after which Mr. E. E. Miller will pronounce the benediction."

"But may I not make a brief reply to some of your statements?"

"No! We have but one lecture announced for to-night. Let us sing."

Elder Pratt sat down. "It's no use," he whispered to Luther. "We are treated this way almost everywhere."

But Sidney Luther sprang to his feet. "Mr. Miller!" he cried, "may I at least make an announcement?"

"No! Not here!"

One or two voices sang out, "Set down! Set down! Put him out!"

At this juncture the long figure of Davidson erected itself in the midst of the people. "Mr. Hubbard," he began, "you surely can extend to Mr. Luther the courtesy that he asks. I object to this meeting closing otherwise." Gathering vehemence, he went on, "I am surprised that you will not permit Elder Pratt to speak. If the things that you have said are true, you certainly can prove them; if they are not true, we want to know it. I notice that no

effort has been made to meet the elder on Bible grounds; you simply have assailed the characters of men; and I want to say that, if I were permitted to talk and no one were permitted to reply, I could take the characters of John Wesley, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and other reformers, and with the aid of books written by their enemies I could paint them as black as—as ebony.”

Luther caught the rumbling undertone of Norman Barker's voice, “Strikes me Hubbard's gettin' his reply, after all.” Mrs. Barker silenced further comment.

“Let us sing the doxology!” shouted Reverend Hubbard.

Davidson remained standing. “I want to know what you are going to do about it!” he persisted.

Hubbard yielded with poor grace. “Well, let him make the announcement,” he conceded, “but we don't want any argument.”

Luther was possessed of enough of the spirit of discernment to fully understand the diabolical look of enmity that was directed toward him when this concession was made.

“I want to announce,” said Luther, when he had gained the floor, “that we will fit up the little park adjoining this church, owned by Mr. McBernie, for open-air services. The first of these will be Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. There are no other services in town at that hour, and we invite all to attend and hear the other side of this question.”

CHAPTER 12.

THE MOB.

ELDER PRATT, Sidney Luther, McBernie, and Donald worked all day Friday and Saturday seating the little park, building a platform, and otherwise preparing for the services that were to begin Sunday afternoon. Norman Barker hauled the planks that were used in constructing temporary seats. He drove four blocks out of his way to avoid passing the Barker home.

Also, Uncle Billy Stivers was busy all day Friday and Saturday.

With the coming of darkness, Saturday night, the men put the finishing touches to their work and wended their way homeward, Donald and his father stopping at the Luther home for the evening meal.

Up-town, a little group of men had formed early in the evening; and, when darkness had fully fallen, they took their way, following the devious but determined leadership of Uncle Billy Stivers, down past the old union church. From the shadow of this edifice, another, taller and more portly than Uncle Billy, stepped forth and joined them. The dark figures entered the little park and were lost in shadow, but presently a torch flamed up to light their work of devastation. Like dancing black shadows, they flitted hither and thither, overturning seats, tearing down the platform, piling lumber in apparently inextricable confusion.

The torch was extinguished, and the men reassembled in the street. A consultation was held, one or two false starts were made, and presently they got away in the direction of the Luther home.

When they neared the little cottage they halted. One stole forward and peered in at the dining-room window; coming back, he joined the little group in the shadow, and all waited for some little time. Presently, the front door opened and Donald and McBernie came out, homeward bound. Minnie, standing in the doorway, held the lamp over her head to light them to the gate.

When quiet again reigned, the dark figures moved forward, divided, and arranged themselves on either side of the door. Presently there came a little, friendly, hypocritical knocking. After a moment, Sidney Luther opened the door, and instantly was seized on either side and jerked out into the darkness. It was so sudden that the dazed family knew not what had occurred. But immediately from the outer darkness came the sounds of a struggle, heavy blows, and curses. "Oh, somebody's killing papa!" screamed little Viola, and threw herself upon the distracted mother.

The heroes of melodrama, single-handed, overthrow regiments; but in real life, the average man, taken unaware, is easily subdued by ten or twelve other average men. They carried Luther a little to the east of the house, where one stood guard with a bundle of heavy whips that were to be used in the further ceremonies.

As soon as her mind recovered from the surprise

of the onslaught, Minnie darted out the back door and ran to the McBernie home. At her first call, the old Scotchman proved himself a man of action. Such clan as he had he led to the fray. He seized a club from the woodpile, as he ran, closely followed by Donald, who though a sprinter, could not overtake him. Minnie came sobbing and stumbling in their wake.

Men who go in mobs, to attack one unarmed individual, are ever cowards. The noise of the approaching runners indicated numbers. Moreover, Donald was excited; he could not lay his tongue readily to the McBernie yell, yet his feelings demanded expression, and so he sounded his time-tried college yell. A college yell sounds barbaric under the most favorable circumstances. The assailants scattered a little, and as McBernie came around the house and charged them with his club (he had not yet indorsed the doctrine of non-resistance), they broke and fled.

One of them stumbled over the unconscious form of Sidney Luther, and fell flat upon his face. Almost instantly McBernie was on his back. The attitude that the old man assumed indicated that in his youthful days he had wrestled "beside the bonny brier bush," or elsewhere. He met and foiled every attempt of his captive to turn himself or wriggle from under.

"Bring a light, lad!" called the old man, "we'll be identifying one of them."

When the light was brought, and placed in Minnie's trembling hand, directly over the wrestlers, the fallen one ceased his efforts to rise and burrowed

his face into the sod. The old man got upon one knee, planting it firmly in the small of his captive's back, thrust his right leg far to one side to get a purchase, inserted one hand under the fallen one's shoulder, and with a lightning like motion flopped him over, and as quickly pinioned him to the earth again.

The head wagged from side to side in a vain effort to avoid identification. The old man scrutinized the distorted features a moment, and then slowly remarked, "Can these bones live again?"

"Look ye here, Donald and Minnie," he went on; "mark him well, if it should come to the courts."

He released the captive. "Now," he said, "we have three witnesses. If ye should get a higher call, elsewhere, say early to-morrow morning, ye might do worse than to take it."

CHAPTER 13.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

IT WAS Sunday afternoon. Donald and Minnie came down the front walk and out the gate, bound for the afternoon services.

Why must we at this point chronicle a misunderstanding that separated these two young lives and caused great anxiety and heartburning? Yet 'tis an accepted adage that the course of true love never did run smoothly. Many books of fiction are written

on the basis of this theory. Always there comes a quarrel, a jealousy, an accident, or an illness that destroys or threatens the happy culmination whither the fond reader would fain hasten.

Ephraim Wilson passed them as they came out of the gate. We repeat, Why must we chronicle a separation? Why break the little cord of love that has run like a golden thread through this story.

We will not! Donald and Minnie were not posing behind the footlights, or in one of the "six best sellers"; they were simply an ordinary young man and an ordinary young woman (either would have scorned such a statement about the other), and, like average mortals, they pursued the even tenor of their ways,—no heartbreak, no estrangement, no tragedy, no tears,—put the book away unfinished, if you will, 'tis true!

The sun was shining brightly, and Minnie raised her little lace parasol,—just as great a protection against the summer sun as is the average lady's parasol, or the average lady's hat against the winter's wind; just as self-sufficient as the average lady's four inches square of lace-bordered handkerchief.

When first erected, after the manner of its kind it tilted Donald's hat to one side. He straightened the hat. Minnie held the parasol a little higher, apologized, and a moment later it caught the hat from above and tilted it to the other side.

Donald took the parasol, with a smile, and calmly pursued his way, holding it so that it shaded a minute portion of the surrounding landscape and left Minnie exposed to the wilting rays of the sun. As

he possessed himself of the offending parasol, Minnie looked up and gave him a pretty little grimace.

He looked at her, smilingly, and declared, "That makes me think of the first time I ever saw you. I'll bet you don't remember."

"Your language is shocking," she chided; "but I do remember. It was in the old Walnut Street Church, ages and ages ago, when we were young. You came to meeting with your father."

"Yes," he said, "and you were chewing gum. You made a face at me. Anyway, an old theory is exploded."

"What theory?" she inquired.

"That gum-chewing spoils one's looks," he replied.

He was rewarded with another grimace that he mentally labeled, "Adorable."

A little silence fell upon them. At first it was quite delightful. Presently, as they walked along, it grew strained. With feminine intuition of impending matters of importance, Minnie's heart began to thump; but she could think of absolutely nothing to say to relieve the situation.

No proposal of marriage ought ever to be written down and published. At this crisis in two lives, the deepest and purest of emotions appears but meanly clad in the halting words that come to abashed lips, and ought not to be paraded in such dress before the curious public.

However, we may divulge this much of the answer: "I—I made a vow once—that—that may prevent."

"A vow? What vow?"

"I—I vowed that I—I would never—marry a preacher; and I'm just sure you will be a preacher. You—you know you said you would—when—when you grew up."

"But, don't you see!" protested Donald, trying to get a look at the flushed face under the wide-rimmed hat, "that's all the more reason why we should not delay! I'm not a preacher yet!"

CHAPTER 14.

SIDNEY LUTHER'S DEFENSE.

A SPECIAL preaching-meeting had been announced for three o'clock Sunday afternoon, in the old union church; but none was held. It was given out that Reverend J. Albert Hubbard had been suddenly called away by telegram. There were no services to conflict with the one in the little park.

The better element of the town resented the attack that had been made upon Luther. A crowd of men, led by Norman Barker, came down early Sunday morning and rearranged the seats. Under the immediate and tender ministrations of Rose Luther, who wasted no time in identifying McBernie's captive, Sidney had been speedily restored to consciousness; and, though scratched and battered, he was on hand at meeting time. It had been decided that he should deliver the first sermon; word had gotten out that he was to make his defense, and the attendance was

all that could be desired. Even Mrs. Barker came, mainly to watch Barker.

The sun shone merrily down through the maple boughs; the birds twittered overhead; the pine boards smelled of the far northern pineries. Sidney Luther was in fine spirits, and went here and there, shaking hands with every one, choosing to overlook affronts, feeling no resentment toward any living being. All in the world that he desired was an opportunity to tell people what he believed—like one of old, he thought, "*Strike, but hear me!*"

As he stepped upon the platform and took a seat by the side of Elder Pratt, he noticed a little coincident in the formation of his audience. The Saints, coming first, had taken seats to the extreme right, clustering around Rose Luther. Among them he saw the smiling faces of Donald and Minnie, and discovered a new light thereon. Others, coming later, had rather avoided the little group, and sat or stood to the left and in front of him. Even Mc-Bernie, for some inscrutable reason, had not joined the group of Saints, with whom his lot had been cast of late.

What a splendid place in which to preach, thought Luther. A moment later he was diverted by the maneuvers of Deacon and Mrs. Deacon Hardpack, who were seeking seats. "Jonas," cautioned the wife, "you must set here in the sun, so's to not ketch cold." The old deacon settled the matter by taking a seat in the densest shade to be found.

How shall we describe the sermon? It is useless to attempt the task, because we can not convey in

words the spirit of it, more than we could convey the opposite spirit that had seasoned the Reverend J. Albert Hubbard's attack. The latter gentleman had attacked character; he had placed it within Sidney Luther's power to reply in kind, but instead, Luther passed by personalities, and taking up Hubbard's discourse, point by point, answered him with biblical and historical evidences. With logic and evidence he fell upon him in mass, crushed him in detail, marched through his ranks, cut him to pieces, captured his outposts, stormed his citadel, spiked his cannon, overbore his colors, routed him, devastated him, and did other things. His most poignant regret was that the Reverend Hubbard was not present; but, in any event, that could not have been expected. "He missed a fine funeral-sermon," declared Barker.

Having answered Hubbard, he turned his attention to the second division of his discourse, which he had announced under the head, "Why I am a Latter Day Saint." He gave them a history of his search for truth during the past years, and of the evidences that had been given to satisfy him that he had at last found that which he sought.

It seemed that he was preaching for the first time. The gospel had come to him "with power, and with assurance, and with the Holy Ghost." True, his eloquence and personal ability were valuable accessories, but 'twas the truth, now well in hand and used as an instrument of precision, that gave him a power that day that caused people to marvel, and hewed the way through prejudice and ignorance.

When at last he was quite done, having talked for two hours to an audience that never moved, opportunity was given for remarks, replies, or questions.

McBernie arose slowly to his feet, and turned to face the audience. "Friends," he began, "Let me give you a thought: I have decided in my mind that no man must pray for God to lead him into the right church unless he is willing to enter the Latter Day Saints' Church. I mind telling Mr. Luther before he came here that he would find some sheep and some unruly goats. I read in Matthew 25, how they were divided, and the sheep were placed on the right hand, while the—the others were to remain on the left. Now I thinket that Mr. Luther has anticipated that day, and he has a little flock of the true sheep on his right hand. I want to be one with them. I have searchet the scriptures true and faithful, and I know they have the right way. Who will follow me?"

With shining face, the old man made his way across the little space and sat down among the Saints. There were others who followed, in ones and twos, honest men and women who had attended Elder Pratt's meeting and were fully decided. Norman Barker started to his feet, but a firm hand on his coat tail drew him back. Mrs. Deacon Hardpack stood up, glanced apprehensively at the deacon, and sat down. The deacon got slowly to his feet and made his way across and sat down by McBernie; his wife followed with alacrity.

The tide had turned. These were the first of many who were led to the truth during the meetings that followed; the first of many who were to hear the

gospel under the ministrations of the minister who was different. The series of meetings closed only to make way for the little church that was erected under the maple-trees, on ground donated by Mc-Bernie.

‘I wandered long in darkness, yet sought the narrow way,
And my life was like the surging of the sea;
But now I am rejoicing in this the latter day,
Since the precious angel message came to me.”

THE END.

AN AFTERWORD.

THE CHIEF events that figure in the story of The Minister Who Was Different actually occurred in the life of Elder ———, one of the most prominent of the early elders of the church. He was pastor of one of the prominent churches of the city of Pittsburg. He found himself out of harmony with his church creed, resigned his pastorate, and secured employment as a tanner. Afterward he became nominally connected with a more liberal church, moved to distant fields, and resumed ministerial work, at the solicitation of friends. He became exceedingly popular, and built up a flourishing church. The congrega-

tion purchased a tract of land and had a residence in course of construction, intending to present them to him, but he was not destined to enjoy these fruits of his labors. Elders of the Latter Day Saints' Church visited him and were invited to preach in his church. He was converted and baptized. Later he was ordained an elder, and in time came to occupy a high position in the church. At one time a mob took him from his home at night and beat him nearly to death. However, the story of Sidney Luther does not pose as an historical document; it does not invite criticism as such. In the story a later date is given to events than that at which they actually transpired and new characters and scenes are introduced to fill in the drama of life where history is silent.

E. A. S.

An Instrument in His Hands

Mary Leland Carter



An Instrument in His Hands

CHAPTER I.

MARGARET BROWN sat by her window, an open letter in her hand, a troubled look on her face. The sweet scent of apple-blossoms filled the air and the birds were singing joyously, but all these failed to rouse her. She had just read a letter from a favorite cousin whom she was expecting to visit her for a few weeks. When the letter was received she had felt very much pleased, as she expected it to inform her of the date when Eva would arrive. But her look of pleasure was soon changed to one of dismay.

"My dear cousin," she read, "I have news for you; good news. I feel that I have found peace at last. You know how long, ever since I was a little girl, I have been troubled about my soul's salvation. You know I never could seem to feel satisfied about my being accepted of God as his child; and you know how often I have sought help from this religious worker and that, but all to no purpose. They would tell me I need not to be anxious, I need only to believe in Jesus and I would be saved. But I have never felt sure that I did believe, for I never felt that peace and assurance that the consciousness of being a child of God should give. But you know all this, for we have often talked of it, and you, too, have failed to

find that which your soul is longing for; now, dear Margaret, I believe I have found that which will satisfy.

"How often we have wished we might have lived in the days of the apostles. What would you think of a church with apostles and prophets in it now? A church where sick are healed, where the blind receive their sight, where the signs promised in Mark 16 do follow the believer? would you not think such was the true church of Christ?

"All this and much more I find in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Now don't be startled. This is not what we have been brought up to call 'Mormonism.'

"'But,' you say, 'the Latter Day Saints surely believe in Joseph Smith. It can't be she believes that!' But I do,—just that. I believe he was a prophet sent of God to clear away the creeds that are so blinding the religious world to-day, and to establish the pure gospel of Christ again upon the earth. I believe that he was a good man, that these stories about him are but a device of Satan to hinder his work; and I believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.

"But I have not time in this letter to tell you more. Now, don't worry, dear cousin, and fear I have been deceived. I have given much thought and prayer to this, and feel that the Lord has directed me.

"I should have written you of this before, but have been so busy with my school-work; and I thought I could tell you so much better than I could

write it. I did not expect to be baptized before seeing you, but two weeks ago an opportunity was given me and I dared not delay.

"Look for me next Saturday. Till then, good-bye; and do not judge me until you have heard more.

"Lovingly yours,

"EVA HARVEY."

Letting the letter fall from her hand, Margaret sat, deeply troubled. Her cousin a "Mormon"! Surely she had taken leave of her senses! Her mind must have been affected by so much ill health and the loss of her parents!

Finally, taking the letter, Margaret went downstairs and read it to her mother, who was sadly grieved and troubled.

"Poor Helen's child is as dear to me as my own," she said. "To think of her coming to this. I would much rather have seen her laid in the grave with her mother."

"Hard work in the schoolroom, and the trouble she has passed through, have been too much for her," said Mr. Brown. "We must try to keep her with us till she gets well rested, and perhaps we can get these fancies out of her mind," said the mother. "I wish we could persuade her to stop teaching and to make her home with us altogether," said Mr. Brown. "Of course she does not feel that she can let her brother support her, but she would be as welcome here as our own children, and there is enough for all. Then I am sure we could get her right again along religious lines, for a more honest, conscientious little Christian I never saw."

At family prayers that night Mr. Brown prayed earnestly for the niece who, as he thought, was drifting into so great darkness.

During the next few days many plans were made to bring to her senses the supposed poor, misled girl. Also not a little apprehension was felt as to how she would conduct herself—whether she would be changed in any way.

"I feel almost ashamed to have her come," confided fourteen-year-old Alice to her mother. "At school to-day Jennie Mayo told me she heard my cousin was a Mormon, and the other girls got hold of it, and they think it is so queer."

"Well, dear, your cousin isn't very well, and we must try to be very good to her," said her mother. "You know she has no father nor mother."

When Saturday came and Eva arrived, a little constraint was felt by all. This, however, soon passed away, for she seemed her old, bright self, and more happy than they had seen her for a long time.

"How well you are looking, dear child," exclaimed Mrs. Brown.

"Yes, auntie, I am perfectly well, I think," she replied.

Not till Eva and Margaret had retired to the room they were to occupy together, was the subject of religion mentioned.

These cousins had been the closest of friends, having been playmates in childhood and afterward roommates at the seminary. Both were members of the Baptist Church and had been accustomed to read and pray together each night before retiring.

But to-night Margaret hesitated: Will she care for the Bible now, she thought, and will she pray as of old? I have heard that the Mormons put Smith in the place of Christ.

She also remembered hearing that the Latter Day Saints had written the Bible over, so she was somewhat relieved when Eva took from her traveling-case the old, well-remembered Bible, and asked Margaret what she would like to read. After a chapter had been read and they had knelt in prayer, the ice was broken.

Eva had already met with many rebuffs in attempting to talk of her faith with those whom she had thought would be very glad to hear the truth, so she asked a little timidly if she might tell her cousin more about the light she had found.

"Why, yes," Margaret replied slowly, "I suppose you may talk if you wish, but it is only fair for me to tell you that I was very much surprised and grieved when I received your letter; and I certainly think you must be sadly deceived. Why, just think of all the things that were said of the Latter Day Saints, of the way they are looked upon by all. And they make trouble everywhere they go. This of itself shows that they can not be a good people—surely not the church of Christ."

Eva lifted up her heart a moment in prayer for help to bring the truth before her cousin, then replied, "Have you ever stopped to think how the early Christians were regarded by those of their times? We learned that at school from history; but please take your Bible and see what they say:

first, look up Luke 12:51-53; we have there in Christ's own words that his teachings would cause division among the people. Then read John 7:43 and Acts 28:24, 29. We see from these that it did cause division. The twenty-second verse says they were a sect everywhere spoken against. From 1 Corinthians 4:12, 13, we learn that Christ's followers were reviled, persecuted, defamed, 'made as the filth of the world.' Christ, in Luke 6:22, bids his followers rejoice when men hate them and cast out their name as evil for his sake. So it seems to me, since it is a fact that our people are a sect everywhere spoken against, their name cast out as evil, and divisions caused among the people by their teachings, that these things are not to be used against us, as you say, but are in our favor. Could we be the church of Christ and be free from these things, I wonder? You know Paul says 'all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' "

"I do not think that applies to our day," replied Margaret, "for none of the churches, those that we know must be true churches of Christ, are persecuted."

"How do you know that the churches which you have in mind are, as you say, the churches of Christ?" asked Eva.

"What a strange question," said Margaret; "do they not worship Christ, and believe the Bible, and require their members to follow its teachings?"

"If they taught their members to follow the teachings of the Bible, would there be so many different

churches? Does the Bible teach directly opposite things, each to be right, and each to be the only way? For instance, one says we must be baptized; another, that baptism does not matter; one, that baptism is immersion; another, that it is sprinkling. Can both be right? The Bible says 'one baptism.' "

"All can not see alike," said Margaret; "I don't think it is meant that we should, for the Bible is not plain on many points."

"But we have the promise of the Holy Spirit which will lead us into all truth," said Eva. "Will it lead one minister to teach one way, another to teach the opposite? This is one reason why I believe the ministers of to-day do not preach by the Spirit, for then their teachings would be alike. 'He that is sent of God will preach the word of God.' I don't believe they would have to attend theological schools to learn how to preach if they were called of God; like those boys in our class at school, for instance: they chose the ministry as a profession, just as Albert Small chose law. Where does their call come in?"

"Why, didn't Christ say, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'?" replied Margaret, quickly. "I don't think one needs any call besides that, provided he is a Christian and has the desire to help."

"If you will read the sixteenth chapter of Mark carefully," replied Eva, "I think you will find Christ was talking to the eleven only. Men have no more right to act under the apostles' commission than under one given to Washington; for instance,

Hebrews 5:4 says 'no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.' I think one reason for the present religious confusion is because men do take the priesthood upon themselves, not waiting for God to call whom he will. So they are not given the Spirit, but have to preach by their own learning."

"Let's not talk any more to-night, as it is getting late," said Margaret. "I expect there may be truth in what you have said. I have thought often of Christ's words, that his disciples must be one. I don't see just how they are one. Still it must be all right or it wouldn't be so. Now, don't say another word, for I am going to sleep."

But, notwithstanding her words, Margaret did not soon sleep that night.

"What if it be true after all," she thought.

"What if men are preaching without authority so that God does not give them his Spirit? That would result in many creeds, just as we have now, for each would teach as he saw.

"But then, even if our churches are not just right, surely the Latter Day Saint Church can not be, with their Joseph Smith and their Book of Mormon. I must get Eva to tell me about that, for it seems so strange that any one with her education would listen for a moment to such stories. But how strange it seems to hear Eva talk so much and seem so familiar with the Bible. Why, I hardly knew those passages were in it at all. It can't be that she has discarded the Bible after all, even if she does believe the Book of Mormon, too."

Eva also remained awake for some time. She felt thankful for the kindly welcome given her. She had feared it might be otherwise, as she had already been made to realize the change that can take place in one's dearest friends when they learn that one has obeyed the gospel of Christ. "I wonder why it is," she mused. "Surely if they think they have the gospel and they are mistaken they should with kindness seek to show us our mistake, instead of treating us with coldness and scorn. That is not following Christ's teachings."

Eva earlier in the week had received a rather harsh letter from her brother telling her she had brought disgrace upon the family, and that though she should always have a home while he had one, yet she must never seek to bring her strange beliefs before them nor mention them in any way.

She had also received a cold letter from one who had been a close friend all through school-days, and of whose sympathy she had felt so assured. To add to the trials of the week, the school superintendent had informed her that her services would no longer be needed in his schools; that while none had done more satisfactory work, and he had no fault to find with her personally, yet he realized there was a strong feeling of prejudice against her, and that in whatever school he might place her, trouble would be likely to follow.

"Perhaps you did not know, Miss Harvey," he had said, "that even in this district where you have taught for so long, and have been so well liked, there

were some who wished me to close your school when you took the step you did two weeks ago."

Under these circumstances it is small wonder that Eva was touched and grateful for the kindness of her uncle's family. Before sleeping that night she prayed earnestly that they might come to see the truth for themselves. She prayed, too, for strength to bear whatever might come to her of trials, and that the Lord would direct all her ways and bring good, even from these bitter experiences.

CHAPTER II.

THE morning dawned clear and pleasant. After doing the morning work and studying their Sunday-school lessons the family went to church. Eva felt it best to accompany them, but it must be confessed that she dreaded the day very much. She did not know how her old friends would receive her.

It proved indeed to be a trying ordeal. Noticing how this one and that greeted her niece with coldness, while all seemed to regard her with curiosity, Mrs. Brown marveled at Eva's composure.

"I know it must be very trying to her," she thought, "for she was always painfully sensitive and shy, and the least disapproving word seemed to take the courage from her.

"I do not believe she will have the courage to cling to her faith, if she has to receive such treatment as this. I hope not, I am sure. But what-

ever she does, the poor child must suffer for the sad mistake she has made. We must be as good to her as possible, and I will have a talk with her."

That night as Eva sat alone, looking rather sober, her aunt came in, and, seating herself by the girl, took her hand and said, "I know this has been a hard day for you. I was surprised at the way the people treated you, but you see, dear, what your act is bringing upon you. Why not give it all up? We will all help you, and soon all will be forgotten, and you will have your old place with your friends."

"I can't give it up, Auntie," replied Eva. "It means more than all things else to me. I shall have to cling to it if I lose every friend I have."

"Well, I don't know but you will lose every friend you have," said her aunt, a little impatiently. "How you can turn away from everything good and follow such a people is more than I can understand—a girl brought up in a Christian home. I don't see how, when you have been brought up to believe the Bible and love the Lord, you can turn away now."

"Aunt Nell, I have not turned from the Bible. It is more to me than ever before," replied Eva, earnestly, "and I am trying to show my love for the Lord by obedience to his commandments. Christ said, 'He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.' "

"Well, if your people have not turned away from the Bible they have surely added to it," said her aunt. "The last chapter of the Bible says no man shall add to the word of God."

"Yes, but it nowhere says God could not add more, nor that he would not."

"He has spoken all that is necessary," said her uncle, who with Margaret had entered the room while they were speaking. "Revelation has now ceased, and we need no more prophets."

"I don't think the Bible teaches that way," replied Eva.

"Well, how does it teach? Come, prove your statement, my girl," said her uncle.

Eva took her Bible, and turning to Amos 3:7 read, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Then she read the promise in Joel 2:28 that God would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, that some would be able to prophesy.

"Oh, but that was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost," interrupted Mr. Brown.

"Peter said, 'This is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel,'" replied Eva. "I think he meant that this was that same Spirit. At least it could hardly have been entirely fulfilled at that time. Peter says 'in the last days.' They were not then living in the last days."

"Well, go on with your reading," said her uncle.

So Eva read passages from 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, where prophecy was given to the church, and where Paul commanded the saints to desire to prophesy. Also she read John 16:13 where Christ promises among other things that the "Holy Spirit should show them things to come." She also called their attention to several other passages, and spoke

of Christ's warning his disciples to beware of false prophets. "He would hardly have done that if there were to be no true ones. He said we should know them by their fruits. The Bible test of a prophet was that if what he said came not to pass he had not spoken in the name of the Lord. Many prophecies of Joseph have already been fulfilled," she said.

"What do you believe about him?" asked her aunt. "I have heard that it is really he, and not Christ, that you people worship."

"We believe that he was a prophet; that the church of Christ had become disorganized, that the gospel was no longer preached in purity and power, and that it was his work to organize the church just as it was organized by Christ and his inspired apostles; that it was his work to clear away the creeds, the commandments of men, that the pure gospel might again be preached, the gifts and blessings be enjoyed as of old. He taught no new gospel, and is not in any way put in the place of Christ, any more than those old time prophets were."

"But he was a bad, immoral man," said her uncle, "and was under arrest many times."

"He was not a bad man," replied Eva, "and while his enemies caused his arrest many times, he was never once convicted of any crime, even though tried by hostile courts. When his enemies found they could get no hold upon him that way they said if the law could not reach him, powder and ball could, and they finally murdered him."

"But his having so many wives, and teaching

polygamy; I don't see how any one can overlook that," said Mrs. Brown, warmly.

"But he had only one wife," replied Eva, "and he never taught polygamy, but his teachings were directly opposed to it. This matter was thoroughly sifted in the United States Circuit Court a few years ago, when our church and the Brighamites went to law about the ownership of property held by the church before the death of the Prophet, when the church became disorganized. The Utah people claimed they were the true successors of that church and brought all possible evidence that their practices and teachings were the same as those taught by the Prophet. But Judge Philips, after thoroughly and impartially going over all the evidence on both sides, stated that the Utah church had materially departed from the faith, and that Brigham Young—not Joseph Smith—was responsible for the introduction of the Adam-god theory, blood-atonement, polygamy, etc. He cleared the good name of Joseph Smith, and only those who are ignorant, or those without principle, who wish to blind the eyes of others, use these arguments against him now."

"But there must have been some trouble with him," said Mr. Brown, "or such charges would not be brought against him. A truly innocent man is not likely to be very much misjudged."

"Didn't they misjudge Christ?" asked Eva. "They accused him of being a wine-bibber and a deceiver. 'The servant is not above his master.' " Then she asked, "May I read some passages from the Doctrine and Covenants?"

"What book is that?" asked Margaret.

"It is a book containing the covenants and commandments of the Lord to his people in these days. It was written by Joseph Smith, by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit."

Eva saw and felt hurt by the look her hearers exchanged, which said as plainly as words, "Poor, deluded child," but she quietly got her book and read section 49, paragraph 3: "Whoso forbiddeth to marry, is not ordained of God, for marriage is ordained of God unto man; wherefore it is lawful that he should have one wife, and they *twain* shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation." She read from section 42, paragraph 7: "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and none else; and he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall deny the faith, and shall not have the Spirit; and if he repents not, he shall be cast out." She read section 111 on marriage, calling attention to the obligation each must take before being pronounced man and wife, viz.: "You both mutually agree to be each other's companion, husband and wife, observing the legal rights belonging to this condition; that is, keeping yourselves wholly for each other, and from all others, during your lives." Not until this promise is made will they be pronounced man and wife.

When she had finished she said, "You see what the teachings of the church are along these lines. If Joseph Smith was a bad man (which can not be proved), that does not affect the teachings. They

remain unchanged, and they, not Smith's life, are our standard."

"Tell us about the Book of Mormon, Eva," said Margaret. "The shower will not be over so that we can go to meeting this evening."

"This book contains an account of the people who formerly dwelt in this country," replied Eva. "It is a history or record kept by themselves and handed down from generation to generation. It also contains the gospel in its purity, as delivered to them by Christ himself. For this reason it is a useful book for us to have, as it throws light upon many points which the Bible, after passing through so many hands, no longer treats upon with absolute plainness. But it is not to take the place of the Bible. It is to confirm its teachings."

"A book teaching the principles of the gospel with greater plainness would be of use just now, when there is so much confusion, so many private interpretations of scripture," said Mr. Brown, thoughtfully, "but we have no promise in the Bible of such a book; and I could not take stock in anything not sanctioned by scripture."

"I think, Uncle James, if you will have patience to listen to me I can show you that this very book is foretold in the Bible," said Eva eagerly.

"Well, go ahead," said her uncle. "I've been reading the Bible these forty years, and I never saw any reference to the Book of Mormon. I would like to know where you find it."

"First read Genesis 48:16-20, where Israel was blessing Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

Here we see that Joseph's descendants were to become a great people.

"Read the next chapter, verses 22 to 27, and we see the blessings to be given them; also Deuteronomy 33:13-17 describes the land they were to have. The little part assigned them in Palestine will not answer that description. No land so fully answers it as America.

"Not only was Ephraim to have a land, but they were to have a book corresponding to that had by the Jews. Hosea 8:12, speaking of Ephraim says, 'I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.'

"Do you remember hearing the professor at school telling of a meeting he attended in a Jewish synagogue?" Eva asked, turning to her cousin.

"He said the scriptures were in a long roll or stick, just as in Bible times, and they called it the 'stick of the law.' Now read Ezekiel 37, beginning with the sixteenth verse. Here the Lord says, 'Take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions.' The Lord says that when he takes the stick of Joseph in the hand of Ephraim and puts it with the stick of Judah, then will he prepare the way for the children of Israel to gather to their own land.

"We believe the 'stick of Judah' to be the Bible, and the other to be the Book of Mormon. There seems strong proof that it is the Book of Mormon, for when that book was placed with the Bible, God

began opening up the way for the Jews to gather home, just as he said he would.

"We have further proof in Isaiah 29. This speaks of a book to come forth at a time when there shall be no prophets nor seers, and says that shortly after its coming forth Lebanon is to be turned into a fruitful field. That this book was to contain the gospel is shown by the nineteenth and twenty-fourth verses, which say, 'The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, . . . they also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.'

"Shortly after the Book of Mormon was published the former and latter rains were restored, and Palestine is now a fertile land. The eighty-fifth Psalm also says, When truth shall spring from the earth our land shall again yield her increase. In Joel 2:28 the Lord promises, after the rains are restored and the land once more fertile, that he will pour out spiritual gifts and blessings. I do of a surety know that these spiritual gifts are again upon the earth, but I will tell you of that another time.

"Now, if the Bible is true, there must be a book to come forth, and since the time is already past, where is that book if it be not the Book of Mormon?

"Is it at all strange," continued Eva, who had forgotten all shyness in her efforts to make the truth plain to her hearers, "is it at all strange, if certain of God's chosen people came to this country, that God would continue to speak to them here as well as in Palestine? And if he did so speak would not

they be as likely to make a record of it as the Jews were?"

"Then you think there have been Hebrew people here in America," exclaimed Margaret.

"Yes," replied Eva. "There is plenty of proof of that from archæology. Most scholars admit that."

"Do you think the Indians are of Israelitish descent?" inquired Margaret.

"Yes, of the little colony that came out from Jerusalem there finally became two great nations, called the Nephites and the Lamanites. The Nephites, as long as they were obedient to God, were an intelligent people, highly favored of God, having many spiritual blessings.

"The Lamanites, because of their rebellion against God, were cursed with dark skins and became a savage, benighted people, and it is from them the Indians have descended."

"What became of the Nephites?" asked Alice, to whom anything relating to the Indians possessed a charm.

"They finally became very wicked, even after receiving so much light," said Eva, "and the Lamanites were permitted to destroy their nation about four hundred years after Christ's coming."

"Can you give any proof that the Indians are of the house of Israel?" asked Mrs. Brown. "That is a new idea to me."

"Yes, I have something along that line in my note-book. These statements were gathered from writings of those not of our faith, so it can not be said that they were prejudiced. First, I will give

you what the Book of Mormon teaches about this, then give the conclusions arrived at by eminent scholars, who have made careful study and investigation along those lines. Then you may judge for yourself whether there is any foundation for the Book of Mormon statements.

“The book tells us that the first inhabitants of our country came here at the time of the dispersion at the Tower of Babel; when the people were scattered upon the face of all the earth. These became a great nation, occupying here about fifteen hundred years, and finally becoming extinct through civil wars.

“A second colony came here from Jerusalem about six hundred years before Christ. This colony consisted of Lehi and seven other men with their families, or eight men in all, and the book says that four of these, the sons of Lehi, became the principal leaders, of whom the youngest was the greatest. Indian tradition tells us the same. In Brazil, Peru, Hayti, Bogota, Paraguay, Colombia, and Mexico, the tribes formed there all claimed to have descended from four brothers, or chiefs, the youngest being the greatest. The Navajoes, Pawnees, Ottoes, Choctaws, and Iroquois claim to have sprung from eight ancestors. The Shawnees, Natchez, Virginians, Creeks, Algonquins, and Dakotas, from four. They claim that their birthplace was across the sea. The Book of Mormon says these early inhabitants were of light complexion, but that on account of rebellion against God the Lamanites were finally cursed with dark skins, that they might not look pleasing to the people of Nephi, so that they would not mix with

them. The book says they brought with them the sacred writings of the Jews, up to the time of Zedekiah, and including a few of Jeremiah's prophecies. Inscriptions have been found since the book was given to the world; these inscriptions proving that the dwellers here did have a knowledge of Moses and other Old Testament characters, the ten commandments, etc., and these are written in what scholars say is Hebrew, of about the time of Ezra. Another proof of their descent is that Hebrew words are found in the Indian language, one scholar stating that five hundred words, within his knowledge, are like the Hebrew.

"The book says that the inhabitants were visited by Christ after his resurrection and were taught the gospel, thus harmonizing with John 10:16, where Christ speaks of other sheep who were to hear his voice.

"The traditions and customs found among the Indians indicate that they must have had, at some time, some knowledge, not only of the Mosaic law, but also of the gospel. The old Spanish fathers who first came here declared that the Devil had given the Indians an imitation of the gospel to destroy their souls. So the Spaniards destroyed most of the books found among the enlightened tribes of the south. These early explorers witnessed many rites much resembling those of Christianity, for the natives worshiped the Great Spirit, had high priests and prophets, practiced confession, absolution, and baptism.

"They had religious feasts, one resembling the

sacrament, bread and wine being distributed by the priests; another resembled the Jewish Passover; another the Feast of Tabernacles. They observed a jubilee year. They made offerings of the first-fruits and the best of everything. Some tribes practiced circumcision. The women were not allowed to worship with the men. Bathing and ablutions were a part of their religious observances.

"They have a tradition of a god born of a virgin. This god came to visit and teach them, and presently disappeared in some mysterious way, after promising to visit his people again in the future, but who has so long delayed his coming that they call him the 'cheat.' All of the tribes had traditions of him. Roger Williams mentions him as found among the New England Indians, viz.: 'A man had wrought miracles among them with some kind of broken resemblance to the sonne of God.'

"Quetzalcoatl, as he was called in Mexico, was said to have been born of a virgin. 'He was of a white complexion, clothed in long white robes, and with a full beard.' In Kingsborough's Mexican Antiquities he is represented as a person crucified.

"Such was the impression made upon the natives by this person that even though so many centuries had elapsed since his appearance, the Aztecs thought he had returned when they first saw the Spaniards.

"The teachings of this god of their traditions were filled with loving-kindness, the loftiest and purest of moral teachings, and precepts. 'Nothing was wanting in them,' says a historian, 'but the name of God and Jesus Christ.'

"After the Nephites lost their identity as a nation, Moroni, who had charge of the sacred records, said he was about to hide them in the earth, as the Lamanites were seeking to destroy them.

"The Stockbridge Indians say they once had a sacred book which was finally hid in the earth. Other tribes, also, have a tradition of a sacred book, and that while they obeyed its teachings they were blessed and prospered in every way. And they also say that their fathers were possessed of an extraordinary divine spirit by which they foretold future events, and which they enjoyed only upon condition of their obedience to the commands they had received."

"That is really interesting," said Margaret, "I don't know where you learned so much. I believe I will have to go to studying."

"I am surprised at so much to verify the statements made in the Book of Mormon, and all of this evidence you say has been furnished by those not of your faith," said Mr. Brown.

"Yes, and there is much more that might be presented."

"I want to know more about the Book of Mormon," said Mrs. Brown; "what are its teachings? Doesn't it teach polygamy?"

"No, indeed," replied Eva, and taking her book she read,

"Behold, thus saith the Lord, This people begin to wax in iniquity; they understand not the scriptures: for they seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms, because of the things which were

written concerning David, and Solomon his son. Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord, wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph. Wherefore, I, the Lord God, will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old. Wherefore, . . . hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife: and concubines he shall have none: For I, the Lord God, delighteth in the chastity of women. . . . Wherefore, this people shall keep my commandments, saith the Lord of hosts, or cursed be the land for their sakes.'

"There is no book in the world more positively condemning sin of every kind. It teaches us to believe in the one true God and in Jesus Christ his Son, and that there is no salvation except through obedience to his teachings."

"Well, I must say you have surprised me a good deal," said Mrs. Brown, after Eva had read several passages. "I have always supposed the Book of Mormon was something upholding sin. Have you read it through? Are you sure?"

"Yes, auntie, and I would like to have you read it and see for yourself."

"Good people," interrupted Margaret, "do you know it is eleven o'clock?"

"Well, I declare!" said Mr. Brown, in a surprised tone. "No minister ever kept me so interested that

I forgot to go to bed. I must confess, little girl, that you have made quite an argument. I should think they would have you out preaching," he added, jokingly.

But, though he spoke lightly, he was more interested than he cared to confess.

CHAPTER III.

SEVERAL DAYS passed uneventfully. Little opportunity was given Eva to talk of the subject nearest her heart, but she improved every spare moment to study. She was eager to learn more of the gospel and to become able to present it to others more clearly. For a long time she had been investigating; seeking to know the truth for herself. Nearly a year before that, while traveling, some one had handed her a tract, entitled Creed Making. Reading at first from curiosity, her interest was soon aroused, and she read with eagerness. This little book was read by her several times, and finally, using the address on the book, she had sent to the publishing house for a list of publications, and was soon hungrily seeking to know more and yet more of the word of life.

A few weeks before this, to her great delight, an elder had come to the little town where she was teaching, and gladly had she been baptized. This had created quite a stir and, as we have seen, caused her to lose her place as teacher.

Though wondering at times where she should go and what she should do next, Eva sought to cast all anxiety from her mind and trust all with the Lord. Meanwhile she decided to remain for a few weeks with her uncle's family, as they so much desired that she should.

Until the death of her parents, this community had been Eva's home, and she had here many friends. Among them was one who had sought to be more than friend. He was a church-member, and bore the name of being an upright and honorable young man; but although Eva felt a strong friendship for him, she had hesitated, and when he had eagerly pressed his suit, she had put him off for a time, feeling that she did not know her own heart.

He had been away for a time, but was now coming home, and the time was drawing near when she had promised to give him a decisive answer. They had not corresponded, as Eva had wished to prove whether their affection for each other was strong enough to survive an entire separation. This had resulted on her part in inclining her heart more to him. Absence and memory had perhaps clothed him with virtues he did not possess. Also her recent experiences had made her long for a home and for some one to protect and shield her that she would no more have to go out teaching or working and have to endure all manner of treatment on account of her faith. But she realized the step she had taken might make a difference in his feelings toward her, also in her duty.

One day while praying for guidance, there came

clearly before her what her life would be if yoked to an unbeliever. She saw what a lack of sympathy there must be under those conditions, with a husband disbelieving, perhaps ridiculing and working against all that she held most sacred; and even if he should make no opposition, yet indifference on his part would tend to make her indifferent, too. She saw how difficult it would be to maintain her own interest and be active in helping on the work under those conditions.

"I dare not risk it," she thought.

"But perhaps he will be glad to listen to the gospel," Hope whispered to her.

A few days later Ralph Brown arrived home. Almost the first words with which his sister greeted him were, "Eva Harvey has turned Mormon."

"What!" he almost shouted.

"Yes, son," said his mother, "it is true. One of those elders was there in M——, and he somehow blinded her, and got her into their hands. Where it will all end I don't know, nor what the results will be for her."

"That ends it all," he thought, angrily, as he went to his room.

But his anger was of short duration as the thought of Eva and her pure, sweet face rose before him.

"I can soon talk her out of it," he thought, "though I don't know when people will forget the disgrace."

His pride was hurt and he did not go to see Eva that night, as he had planned. But the next day his longing to see her overpowered his fear that people would know he had been to see a "Mormon."

As Eva came into the room it seemed to him that she had never looked so charming before. His heart beat fast and the harsh speeches he had planned were forgotten in the longing to take her in his arms and call her his own.

Their greeting, however, was somewhat cold and constrained, as each felt some embarrassment. They were soon chatting busily of his trip, the weather, her school, almost everything but the subject uppermost in the thoughts of each.

Presently a silence fell between them, broken finally by Ralph, who said with some effort, "What is all this they tell me about you, Eva? It is not true, is it?"

"I don't know what you may have heard," replied Eva. "I understand there are stories very far from true going through the neighborhood, as to what I have done and why I did it. I have done nothing more serious than to unite with the church which I believe to be the true church of Christ, the only one on earth in perfect harmony in organization, faith, and doctrine with the church organized by Christ and his inspired apostles."

"In perfect harmony with the church of Christ!" he exclaimed. "Eva, the idea! A church with Joe Smith as its head, polygamy one of its most popular doctrines!"

"But that is not true," she began eagerly, "Polygamy has never been one of the doctrines ——"

"Oh, but is has, and is," he interrupted. "I don't know what fine stories they have been telling you,

but I know, and I don't see how you can help knowing that they both teach and practice polygamy."

"Ralph, you are getting the churches confused. The church that does those things is not the one I am a member of. I belong to the Reorganized Church. The two are entirely separate organizations. When Joseph Smith was killed, that left the church without any leader. Brigham Young usurped the place of authority, and taking those whom he could get to follow him, went to Utah with them. He baptized them over, and he was the one who started polygamy, the Adam-god theory, and all those things. After a while those who had remained true to their first teachings, refusing to follow Young, were reorganized, and it is to that body that I belong. Their teachings are, and always have been, pure and good. They are the teachings of Christ."

"Perhaps they tell you these things, Eva, but it is only to blind your eyes. It is only their trick to catch those whom they could not reach if the faith were shown as it is. They really are one and the same thing. You had better give it all up, for it is a delusion. Come, I have been around the world more than you; can't you take my word for it?" he asked, taking her hand.

"I certainly can not," she said. "We are commanded to prove all things and hold fast that which is good, and that is just what I shall do."

"It is just what you are *not* doing," he said, rather impatiently, "Don't you know, Eva, what they want of you? They will get you into some trap."

"Oh, Ralph, you don't understand," she said sadly; "let me explain it all to you."

"No, I will not," he said. "I know more now than I wish I did. The name alone would have been enough to know. I know, too, that they have blinded the dearest girl in the world. You will see it sometime and thank me for this plain speaking. But let's not talk of it any more now, I want to talk of something more interesting. Are you ready now to tell me I need not wait any longer for my girl?"

"Do you still want me, Ralph, now that I am a Latter Day Saint?"

"Oh, you will soon give that up," he said confidently, "my Eva is too sensible a girl to long be blinded. Yes, I do want you. I know it will be some time before this is forgotten and you as well thought of as of old; but I am willing to bear that," he added, with, as he thought, great generosity.

"No, Ralph, I shall never give it up," she replied, slowly, "and we could never be happy together, not being in full sympathy."

Just at that moment the others entered the room and the conversation became general. Shortly afterward Ralph took his leave. He was not very much discouraged by Eva's reply, for he was, it must be confessed, inclined to think rather highly of himself and his powers. He had seen her face light up with pleasure at his coming, and he could not believe she would long refuse to listen to his pleadings, and to be guided by his superior wisdom.

As for Eva, she realized that the friend she had been picturing to herself these past weeks did not

exist after all, that she had not been thinking of Ralph as he really was. She knew now that he could never satisfy her heart.

"Poor Ralph," she said to herself, "how faithful he has been to me ever since we were little tots, and now I must disappoint him."

She felt sad at this, and a great wave of loneliness swept over her as she thought how father, mother, and home were gone, her only brother vexed with her, most of her friends looking down upon her, regarding her out of her senses, or even worse, her school that was her pride and delight taken from her, and now she must give up the friend that, half unconsciously, she had been depending upon so much.

"What if I am mistaken after all," she thought. It did not seem reasonable that she had found the truth, which all the wise doctors with their wisdom had failed to find, as they must have failed if what she had found was true.

"How presumptuous I have been," she felt. Then the way being opened, one doubt after another crept in, and she lay through the long hours of the night, perplexed and unhappy. At times she tried to pray, but all seemed darkness. Finally she fell to reviewing the past, living over again those weeks when she had sought so earnestly for the right path, and the many, many times that she had lifted her heart in prayer to her heavenly Father not to let her be deceived, but not to let her reject anything that was his truth.

The thought that God has promised wisdom to

those who ask it came to her mind. She knew she had asked guidance with an honest heart, and a full determination to do God's will if she could but learn it. She knew that she had taken each article of the Latter Day Saint faith to the Bible, that she had found each one in perfect harmony with the teachings contained therein. She had also measured other churches by the same standard, and had found them wanting.

"Oh, how foolish I have been to have a doubt," she began to feel. "Why be moved because the wisest and best educated fail to teach this way? The Bible says man by his wisdom can not find out God. It is only by the aid of the Holy Spirit that we can know him, and that is given only to those who are obedient to the commandments. Any amount of learning can not take the place of that. 'If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine.'"

Creeping quietly out of bed, that she might not disturb Margaret, she knelt in prayer, seeking forgiveness for her hours of doubt, asking help that she might become stronger, and that she might be able to keep a straight course, whatever pressure might be brought to bear upon her and however difficult and lonely the path at times might seem.

She arose from her knees comforted and strengthened, and as it was already daylight, a beautiful June morning, she dressed, and taking her Bible, went down by the brook to her favorite seat under an old oak-tree. Here she spent an hour reading, praying, and enjoying the peace and beauty of all about her. Here she found the rest the night had

failed to bring, and returned to the house refreshed and cheerful, with a joy in her heart deeper, it seemed to her, than she had ever felt before.

Before the day was over she had reason to be glad for the quiet time, for it proved to be a very trying day.

Going to church, her friends had greeted her with much coldness. Especially Mrs. Brown and her daughter seemed to take pains to make her feel the weight of their displeasure, for though they had long hoped to receive her some day into the family, they now felt such a thing to be particularly undesirable, and were using their influence to try to turn Ralph from her.

Ralph himself greeted her rather distantly, and did not offer to accompany her home, as had been his custom formerly. This, however, was somewhat of a relief to Eva. She knew now there could be nothing but friendship between them, and felt, though she shrank from it, that she must take the earliest opportunity to have this understood by him.

Sunday afternoon her father's sister, living in an adjoining town, drove over. She was a rather stern, harsh woman, and Eva had never quite gotten over her childish fear of her. So now it was with a little feeling of dread that she greeted her aunt.

"Well, Eva Harvey, I must say you have done a pretty thing now," Mrs. Adams at once began. "To think of your father's daughter, my own niece, to be so lacking in sense! Why, you are a disgrace to the family!

"I don't see, James, what you keep her here for,"

she went on, turning to Mr. Brown, "but I dare say that you even encourage her in it. That would be just like you, for you are always that easy."

"I certainly shall not discourage her in doing what she believes to be right," said Mr. Brown, with dignity, "even though I may think she is mistaken; but I shall try with kindness to reason with her and show her that she has made a mistake; I might further add that whenever I have attempted to do this, I, myself, have learned much of good. Come, Martha, don't be hard on the girl. Remember, truth is truth wherever found."

Eva felt grateful to her uncle for his kind words, and her heart was filled with joy to think he was willing to admit truth as soon as he saw it.

So she listened patiently to her aunt's talk, trying at times to make some defense of her faith and people, but finding little opportunity.

It was a relief to all when Mrs. Adams finally drove away.

It was now time to go to the evening meeting, and Eva realized with disappointment that there would not be the good opportunity for talk that she had enjoyed the previous Sunday.

Little had been said during the week, but Eva had several times seen her uncle reading the Book of Mormon, and she had noticed that when about his work he had seemed preoccupied, as though his thoughts were busy upon something else. Margaret seemed to avoid the subject entirely, but Eva, on entering the room unexpectedly, had twice found her reading some of her tracts.

One evening, as the family were all assembled in the sitting-room where the girls had been having some music, Mr. Brown said suddenly, "Well, Eva, I have read considerable in your Book of Mormon, and must confess that it teaches nothing but good. It is an altogether different book from what I had imagined. It certainly is impossible for a young lad, uneducated as we know Smith was, to have written a book like that. I am a little inclined, though, to think the story of its being written by that clergyman, or at least founded upon his story of the lost tribes, is true."

"Why, uncle, if Mr. Spalding had written it, do you think he would have filled it with a doctrine so unlike his own belief? And as to its being taken in substance from that story he wrote, I have positive proof that it was not, for that missing manuscript has come to light. There is no doubt about its being the very one Solomon Spalding wrote. This manuscript is now held by Oberlin College, Ohio, and a certified copy can be procured at our publishing house and a comparison made.

"The late Professor James H. Fairchild, so long president of Oberlin College, states that he has compared this story with the Book of Mormon and that there is no resemblance between the two, in general or in detail. He says, 'Some other explanation of the origin of the Book of Mormon must be found, if any explanation is required.'"

"Well, supposing the book is true, of what use is it if one lives up to the Bible teachings?"

"Perhaps in one sense it might not be necessary, if

as you say, we live up to the Bible teachings, for it teaches no doctrine contrary to the Bible or not found in it," Eva replied; then asked, "What do you think, uncle, about this that they call higher criticism?"

"I don't like it at all," he replied warmly; "the idea of picking the Bible to pieces that way, telling what we can believe as it reads and what we can not. They are bringing the Bible down to their own level; cutting out everything beyond their power of comprehension."

"Well, then, if the Book of Mormon, teaching the same truths and with such plainness that there can be no question of their not meaning just what they say, comes just now to confirm the Bible, don't you see one use that it is, uncle?"

"But the purpose of the book as claimed by itself is to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers, also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ. The Bible, alone, has proved insufficient to convince the Jew on this point, but now they have the same testimony from their brethren in this land."

"It seems to me, Eva, when you say the Bible is not plain, that you are criticising not only the book, but the Lord himself, since it is his book," said Mrs. Brown.

"I think the Bible as given by the inspiration of God was perfectly plain," Eva replied, "but just think of all these centuries and of the different translators. They say there is no New Testament

manuscript dating back beyond the fourth century. According to Alexander Roberts, D. D., the number of different readings of the New Testament is over one hundred thousand. Every new manuscript discovered adds to them, as does more careful examination of already known manuscripts. Then think of the Dark Ages, and of the Bible being in the hands of the Catholic Church. Is it strange if it has been altered to some extent?"

"I should say," said Margaret, "the strange part is that it has not been altered more."

"Let me read you something of what the Book of Mormon says about it," and, taking her book, Eva read from 1 Nephi 3:40: "And the angel of the Lord said unto me, Thou hast beheld that the book proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew, it contained the plainness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God: wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews in purity, unto the Gentiles, according to the truth which is in God: and after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb, many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away; and all this have they done, that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord; that they might

blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men: . . . thou seest because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God; because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceeding great many do stumble.’ ”

She also read 2 Nephi 2:2: “Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions.”

“2 Nephi, twelfth chapter, speaks of the time when the Book of Mormon should come forth. Is not this a true description of present conditions?” she asked, reading it aloud.

“Perhaps it is,” said Mr. Brown, slowly.

As it was now growing late, the family separated for the night, but Mr. Brown lingered, and taking the Book of Mormon, again read the twelfth chapter carefully.

As he came to the words, “Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, . . . because that I have spoken one word, ye need not suppose that I can not speak another,” he dropped the book and bowed his head in his hands.

"Lord, is this what I am doing?" he cried. "Am I murmuring at what is thy word?" Long he sat there in silence, engaged in deep thought and struggle.

Finally, dropping upon his knees, he said, "Forgive me, Lord, if I have murmured. Show me the way, show me if this is indeed thy truth and I will accept it with gladness to have more of thy word."

The days passed by, for the most part, uneventfully. Ralph soon came to see Eva, confident of his power to win the desired answer from her, and not doubting but he could soon turn her from her present views. She, however, gently, but firmly, refused all his pleadings, and had an answer for all his arguments.

Hurt and disappointed he at last said that which he would later be sorry for, and which caused her pain. But she had the comfort of knowing she had acted rightly, for she now well knew that she had not the respect and deep love which should be felt for the one singled out from all others as a companion for life.

One day Eva received from a friend a marked copy of "Mission Echoes." This copy was devoted to the "Mormon question." Many of the statements seemed to Eva so unfair that she finally wrote the following letter:

"Dear Friend Kate: I have received from S—— a copy of Mission Echoes, and, as I have no other friends there, suppose you must have sent it. If so, I thank you for the kindly thought which I am sure prompted the act. But, why should you send

it to me? You surely know that I have no more connection with the people therein described than you have! No, and no more love for their teachings, either. Moreover, the church of which I am a member is *more active* than any other in exposing and opposing their evil doctrines and practices, and was among the first to send missionaries to Utah to try to turn them from their sinful ways. It is most unfair, I think, when writing of Latter Day Saints, to make no distinction between the true Saints, whose headquarters are located at Lamoni, Iowa, and Independence, Missouri, and the apostate church in Utah.

“ ‘But,’ it is claimed, ‘there is practically no difference between them.’ What! No difference between a people who believe in the God of the Bible, the one true God, and a people who believe that Adam is god, that all may become gods in the hereafter by obedience to certain teachings! No difference between those believing Christ to be divine and no salvation except through him, and those who say he was not begotten by the Holy Ghost, that his blood can not avail for all, that some can be saved only by the shedding of their blood, that is by ‘blood-atonement’! No difference between those who believe that man should have but one wife, that it is not lawful to put her away for any cause save fornication, and those who believe in polygamy! No difference between those who teach that the laws of the land should be kept, and those who despise government! No difference between those who teach that God can not look upon sin with the

least degree of allowance, and those who claim that all manner of sin (save shedding innocent blood) may be committed and one yet become a god in the hereafter, provided he is sealed to one or more wives! No difference between those who claim that no teaching can be from God unless in perfect harmony with his written word, and those who are taught that the written word is of no more worth than the 'ashes of a rye-straw'!

A true Latter-day Saint could never become a polygamist, since that revelation (so called) on polygamy directly contradicts the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants. But, as the Brighamites are taught that the 'dead letter' must not be placed above the 'living oracles,' the door is opened for any vile or absurd doctrine the leaders choose to introduce.

"Please read carefully 2 Peter 2. What people is this a picture of? False teachers privily bringing in damnable heresies, denying the Lord, through feigned words making merchandise of you, those who despise government, speak evil of dignities, have eyes full of adultery, hearts exercised with covetous practices, cursed children which have *for-saken* the *right way* and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam (who was said to have been a polygamist.) Those who speak great swelling words of vanity and allure through the lusts of the flesh.

"And on account of these things another body of people who neither deny the Lord, have eyes full of adultery, nor in any way fulfill the above descrip-

tion, are evilly spoken of, and only *one* other body is so spoken against on account of them.

"Notice carefully verse 2. 'And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the *way of truth* shall be evil spoken of.' That speaks plainly, I think, and one should be careful how he lightly condemns a way evilly spoken of because of that class of people.

"I must take exception to a few statements in your paper: one, the reference to Joseph Smith. Certainly he was arrested many times, over fifty, I believe, but was he ever once convicted?

"It would be a bit difficult in the face of the testimony of disinterested parties to prove that he was immoral. As for putting Smith between us and Christ—what nonsense! You believe in the Bible prophets, are they so many men standing between you and Christ?

"Well, I will bring this long letter to a close. I wish I could see you and have a talk about these things. Don't feel troubled about me; I have not been carried away by some new and strange doctrine. It is the old Jerusalem gospel in all its fullness and purity. I inclose tracts which I hope you will read.

"Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain,

"Your friend,

"EVA HARVEY."

"Writing an article for some paper?" asked her uncle, entering the room as Eva was completing this somewhat lengthy letter.

"Want to read it, Uncle?" she responded, placing it in his hands.

He read it carefully, seemingly with much interest, then said, "I think you have removed my last bit of prejudice against the Latter Day Saints."

He seemed about to add more, but Mrs. Brown entered at that moment and said somewhat sharply, "Are you reading more of that nonsense, James?"

He looked at his wife in surprise to hear her speak in that tone and manner.

Eva was not so surprised. In numberless little ways she had been made to realize of late a change in both her aunt's and her cousin's feelings toward herself, and she began to feel that she must not longer remain with them.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. BROWN IS FACE TO FACE WITH A STRUGGLE.

How EVA longed to meet with the Saints, something she had not yet had the privilege of doing. Only those situated as she was can understand the great longing and homesickness she felt at times. The days and, as the weeks drew to a close, even the hours were counted when her church papers would come, and then what a joy to read them!

She had shortly before this written to the *Ensign* and had mentioned her isolated condition, and this afternoon, to her great surprise, there had come to her from a sister, a letter full of kindly encourage-

ment. Never did Eva forget her feelings upon receiving that letter; and how she read and reread it and kept it among her dearest treasures.

The next day another letter came from a sister in the western part of the State. This sister invited her to come there for a visit and attend their conference in September.

Eva felt she must arrange to accept this invitation, and decided to go at once to her brother's to spend a few weeks, although she felt a little uncertain of the welcome she would receive.

But her fears were groundless. Her brother met her with an anxious face, which brightened a little at sight of her. His wife had been taken seriously ill the day before, and anxiety for her shut out all other thoughts for a while.

The children were enthusiastic in their greeting of Aunt Eva, who was a great favorite with them.

The next weeks were busy ones for Eva. Helen proved to be sick indeed, and in caring for her, and looking after the children and the work, she felt she was needed, and found pleasure in the knowledge that she was of service to those she loved so dearly.

One day she received a letter from her uncle, who, among other things, said, "I am compelled to accept the Book of Mormon as reliable history and am glad to have this additional account of God's dealings with his people. I see that it contains no teachings contrary to those found in the Bible, and I can see that it emphasizes and makes plain some of these.

"But I do not yet quite understand why you

could not remain in your own church and yet believe this to be a true record.

“And why the need of re-baptism, even if you chose to join that church? Our church teaches baptism by immersion. Why, then, are they not all right on that which is really essential?”

Eva wrote in reply as follows: “You do not understand why I did not feel right to continue in the Baptist Church, nor why I had to be rebaptized. I will try to make it plain. You say they baptize by immersion. Yes, but do they teach that it is for the *remission of sins*? (See Mark 1:4; Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 22:16.)

“Also, by what authority do they baptize? A baptism, to be valid, needs to be performed by one authorized to do so, I should say; for that is the act which makes us citizens in the kingdom of God.

“Suppose it was an earthly kingdom. Could any one who felt a desire to do so, make a foreigner a citizen of the country, with the rights and privileges of the same?

“No matter how earnestly a person might desire to do this for another, or how well fitted for the work he, and perhaps his friends, might consider him, you know very well it would be impossible. A foreigner must be naturalized by those holding authority to do so.

“Do you suppose any less rule governs in Christ’s kingdom? Does he allow any one who wishes to act for him? or does he reserve the privilege of calling whom he will? Have we any instances in scripture of those matters being left to the wishes

of the individual, or were his servants called of God as was Aaron? (See Hebrews 5:4.) Even Christ took not this honor upon himself, but waited to be called. Shall man dare to be presumptuous in these matters?

“‘But,’ you may say, ‘our men are ordained and so are given authority.’ Yes, but by whom? What authority have those others to ordain? Has God spoken to them authorizing them to do so? A man not holding authority himself can not give it to another.

“The Catholic Church claims that it is the true church of Christ, that the authority has continued with it down through the ages. Protestants deny this and came out from them because they had wandered so far from the truth. Yet if God has not spoken directly to any of these ‘orthodox’ churches, wherein have they more authority to act for him than the mother church from which they sprang?

“I do not say that they have not attained to higher ground, nor that they have not done away with many wrongs; but have they restored the primitive gospel, or have they simply reformed existing conditions? I do not know that they even claim to have done more.

“But it is said that the Baptist Church did not come out from the Catholics; but has continued down from the apostolic church.

“This being so, when and by what authority did they change the organization as left by Christ and his divinely inspired apostles? When did God

instruct them that the time was come to do away with the officers he placed there as it pleased him? Just notice the table. Where have they gone?

The New Testament gives:

Apostles	}	1 Corinthians 12: 28 Ephesians 4: 11
Prophets		
Evangelists		
Pastors		
Teachers		
Seventies—Luke 10: 1		
Elders—Acts 14: 23		
Deacons—Philippians 1: 1; Acts 6: 3		
Bishops—Philippians 1: 1; 1 Timothy 3: 2		

Your manual gives:

Pastors
Deacons
Clerk
Treasurer

“And your book says, ‘Its only scriptural officers are bishops or pastors and deacons.

“1 Corinthians 12: 18: ‘But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him.’

“Verse 28: ‘And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.’

“We have the statement that God set these officers in the church as it pleased him, and as we have nowhere, to my knowledge, a statement that he is now pleased to have them left out, I prefer to be in the church which follows the pattern we know has been approved.

“These officers were placed in the church for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (See Ephesians 4: 12.) They were to continue ‘till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.’

Have we attained to that yet, so that they should be done away?

“Has your church the spiritual gifts? Paul bids us desire spiritual gifts.

“Does Christ work with your elders confirming the word with signs following? (See Mark 16: 20.)

“It is often argued that these signs are no longer needed; that they were simply to establish the truth at that time. But in this time of so much confusion, so many creeds, so many new doctrines springing up, surely we need the truth confirmed.

“Since God is unchanging, since his gospel is unchanging, and since the Holy Spirit is promised to all who fulfill the conditions, why should we not look for that Spirit to be manifested in the same way as in olden time? Must we think that Christ made a mistake when he said these signs should follow the believer? Or is it that men no longer hear, and so have no chance to believe the pure gospel, that it has been so altered, and commandments of men taught in its place, that Christ can not fulfill his promise?

“History shows that the spiritual gifts were in the church till the second or third century, then ceased because of wickedness, and from an effort to unite Christianity and the teachings of philosophers. After that followed the Dark Ages, when the gospel was almost lost sight of. Then came the Reformation, which, while doing so much, was still a *reformation*—not a *restoration*. Many of the Reformers looked forward to a restoration. Wesley did, also Roger Williams.

"Unless the gospel in its purity was to be restored, what can Revelation 14:6, 7 mean, where John, in being shown things to come to pass afterward, saw an angel bringing the gospel to earth? Jesus said, This gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness, then shall the end come. But surely it must be the *same* gospel, not fragments of it, with lots of human creeds mixed in.

"But if, as we believe, the angel has come, and the gospel is restored, should we not look for the same results as followed in Christ's day? We know they are the same. Christ's followers now as then are persecuted, reviled, defamed, a sect everywhere spoken against, their name cast out as evil; even though the gospel now, just as then, makes better men and women of those who follow its teachings.

"We know the signs do follow the believers now, as then. Remember, they *follow*, they are to confirm, not to make believers. They are not subject to the desire of the individual, but the Lord gives when and where he sees fit.

"Of course none could purposely drink poison and hope to escape; that would be like tempting God. Christ would not work miracles that way for show. The sick *are* healed, the blind restored to sight. Not always, however. Some have not the faith to be healed, or they may be appointed unto death. It is as it was in New Testament times. The sick then were not always healed.

"I wish I could see you and have a talk. This

letter is already too long, yet there is much more I would like to say.

"Please forgive me if I have hurt you in what I said of your church. They are a people that I love, and I shall always remember my pleasant associations with them in the past.

"But I have told you how it looks to me. If I am mistaken I want to be set right, for nothing but the truth can ever do us any good.

"There is a conference to be held at S——, September 15 and 16. I want to go if I can leave Helen, and I wish you would go with me and see for yourself what our people are.

"With love to my aunt and cousins,

"Your affectionate niece,

"EVA."

When Mr. Brown read this letter it started, for him, a new train of thought. He sought to lay aside all preconceived ideas that he might the better see things as they are. He took his Bible and studied that carefully and with prayer for light.

He then turned to history and examined and weighed carefully the claims made by different sects. The following letter will show the conclusions which he finally reached:

"My Dear Niece: Your letter of a few weeks ago received and carefully considered. I now see why you chose to be rebaptized and to become a Saint. I am not sure but I, too, may yet desire to be, as you say, in that organization which we know has been approved by the Lord.

"But there are some points which I must examine

a little more in order to make sure that this is the one approved by him. Now that I have become awakened to these things I shall certainly be very careful to make no step in which I am not sure the Lord is leading me.

"I can no longer accept unquestioningly, as I once did, any church which might be my choice from the fact that my father was a member, or because some particular point of doctrine appealed to me as true. *Now all points* must be in harmony with the Bible or I shall not be satisfied. If there is such an organization on earth to-day I pray the Lord to direct me to it.

"Since your church claims this, it is therefore entitled to a full investigation, so I will arrange to go to the conference with you. We can meet at Hillside Junction, Saturday morning, and go in company from there.

"Hoping this will find Helen much improved, and with our love to all, I will close.

"Your uncle,

"JAMES BROWN."

Meanwhile, what were Mrs. Brown's feelings during this time? After reading Eva's letter, Mr. Brown had handed it to her, not, it is true, without some feelings of hesitancy. But he thought, "Now I am resolved that it is my duty to sift this matter thoroughly, that I may know where the truth lies, and I will do nothing sly or underhanded. She must know even if it grieves her."

But he was surprised at the results. She read a portion of it, then flung it aside angrily. "James

Brown, I wonder how much longer you are going to let this go on! Are you going to keep quiet and let that girl pick our church belief to pieces? The presuming thing! And to think that I allowed her to come here!"

"Why, wife," he replied, "don't feel this way. No harm will be done. If our belief is true, neither Eva nor any one else can pick it to pieces, as you say. Truth will but shine more clearly the more it is opposed. Nothing can alter the truth. But if our creed is too shaky to stand any amount of investigation and opposition, then the quicker it is picked to pieces the better. For myself I am not too fearful of these questions to face them, and I hope if I find something better I am not too creedbound to accept it."

"I guess you will look somewhere besides among the Mormons before you will find anything better than our dear old church," she replied warmly.

"Perhaps so," he answered briefly, and went about his work.

The next few weeks were trying to both. Mr. Brown sought to show her every consideration in his power, but he continued his investigation. The sight of him reading seemed to rouse a spirit which had hitherto seemed foreign to her gentle nature. Ashamed of this, yet seemingly powerless to throw it off, she was irritable, out of sorts with herself and all others.

When he handed her his reply to Eva's letter before mailing it, she reproached him bitterly, accus-

ing him of caring nothing for her or for her wishes any longer.

In vain he tried to reason with her. She would listen to nothing, and, weeping bitterly, said she wished she were dead and that if he insisted upon going to that meeting and should join that disgraceful church she would never live with him again—no, not for one day.

Sorely perplexed and grieved at the turn affairs had taken, Mr. Brown was inclined to promise that he would do nothing contrary to her wishes; but something checked him.

He felt the promise he had made, that he would follow wherever the Lord led, to be a solemn thing, something he could not trifle with even to please her who was dearer than all the world besides. While he had not as yet received full assurance of what the Lord required of him in this matter, he felt he dared not bind himself by any promise which should not leave him free to act as he should be led.

Finally, taking her hand he said, gently, "Dearest, I hope and trust I shall do nothing which need bring such sorrow upon you. It is my purpose to do that which is right and honest before God. And I believe you have always wanted me to do this. Now will you not kneel with me and we will ask God to show us just what is right for me to do and whether he wants me to unite with that church?"

She hesitated a moment, then pulling away her hand said, "I—don't want to, now." Then going hastily to her room she locked herself in.

A bitter struggle now raged in Mr. Brown's mind. He knew if he found the Saints' belief in perfect harmony with the Bible along those lines that he had not yet thoroughly investigated, he should desire with all his heart to unite with them, and that it was quite probable that he would be baptized at the conference, even as his wife feared.

"We have never seemed to have a desire or purpose apart all these years," he thought, "and how can I go against her wishes now—oh, must I?"

"And what if she should leave me! Oh, am I called upon to do this, am I not justified to drop the matter for her sake and the children's?"

Long and bitter was the struggle.

"O Father, dost thou require *all*? May I not serve thee acceptably without this? All else I am willing to do but to bring this grief upon my wife! Oh, wilt thou not show me if this must be?"

As he was thus engaged in prayer, suddenly an open Bible was placed before him and his attention drawn to Luke 14: 26-33.

He read, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he can not be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, can not be my disciple. . . . So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he can not be my disciple."

"I am answered," he said. Then, after a few moments, "Father, thy will be done. I pray thee for strength."

Then a great peace came to him and a voice said, "Fear not to follow where the Lord shall lead. Thus only can you work for the best interests of your loved ones. Be true to duty and they will yet thank you for it. Fail now and you will not only bring condemnation upon your own soul, but you will have closed the door for them to enter the kingdom. Trust, and fear not." Then the light which had illumed the room faded away and he was alone. But what joy filled his heart that the Lord had granted this vision. Truly the Lord does hear and answer prayer even as of old, he realized.

Finding the door of their room still locked he remained on the couch during the night, sleeping little, and spending the time in prayer and praise.

It was a night never to be forgotten for the light and understanding that came to him, and he rose on the morrow spiritually strong and seeing his way plainly before him. Many times in the trying days that followed did he feel thankful for the plain guidance given him. He felt that had there been any doubt remaining with him as to what course to take he must have yielded to his wife's wishes.

When he had told her that the Lord had answered his prayer and shown him he was to go forward in the matter, and had begged her not to let it come between them in any way, she consented for the sake of their children not to leave him, but said nothing could ever be the same again and she wished she had never seen him.

Arriving at Hillside Junction, Mr. Brown looked eagerly for Eva, but she did not come, so he con-

tinued his journey alone, arriving at his destination about noon.

He went to the hotel, got some dinner, then inquired his way to the Saints' chapel, where, taking a seat well back, he listened with much interest throughout the business-meeting then in session.

At its close many came to shake hands with him and bid him welcome. One brother coming up greeted him with a hearty handshake and said, "Well, brother, you seem to be a stranger here. Where are you stopping?"

Upon Mr. Brown's naming the hotel, he said, "That will never do. You must come home with me," and silencing his protests led him away, one of the elders accompanying them.

On the way Mr. Gray said, "So you are not a citizen of the kingdom?"

"I am seeking it," he replied.

"Then you will find it," said the elder, "for God never leaves in the dark those who honestly seek for light."

"I believe that," replied Mr. Brown.

He received a cordial welcome at Mr. Gray's house and was pleased with the atmosphere of love and peace that seemed to pervade it; father, mother, sons, and daughter, all united in one common purpose, that of serving their heavenly Father and exemplifying in their lives his teachings.

How restful this seemed to him after the discord, the lack of harmony, there had been of late in his own home. A great longing filled his heart for such conditions to prevail there, too.

At the evening session Elder F—— preached with much power on the first principles of the gospel as enumerated by Paul in Hebrews 6:1, 2: faith, repentance, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgment.

How wonderful it seemed to Mr. Brown. How plain it was made that these principles were fundamental, just as enduring as the principles that govern in mathematics; that the law of the Lord being perfect no change could be made and it yet continue to be perfect. How he was thrilled at the thought of being baptized for the remission of his sins, and having hands laid on for the giving of the Holy Spirit, even as did Christ's followers of old.

Returning to Mr. Gray's he said to Elder F——, whose roommate he was, "That was wonderful. I never heard anything like that. I've heard many noted preachers, talented men and good, but I never heard the word preached with such plainness and power. This is surely the pure gospel of Christ, that which was preached by Peter and Paul. What it took to save men in those days I believe it will take now, and I want you to baptize me."

The conversation that followed was a feast to Mr. Brown's soul. He believed the man before him to be divinely commissioned to administer in spiritual things. He therefore brought before him many of his perplexities, but he carefully refrained from alluding in any way to his home affairs and to his wife's feelings.

Early the next morning the elder, gathering a few of the Saints on his way, conducted Mr. Brown

to the river, where, leading him into the water, he raised his hand and said, "James Brown, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." He then laid him beneath the waves, even as our Redeemer was baptized, and raised him up to walk in newness of life.

At the morning prayer-service he was confirmed a member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

A great peace and wonder filled his soul as he heard the words, "Thus saith the Spirit to you, my brother: Blessed art thou for thy faith and obedience, and because thou hast set thy face steadfastly to do that which is right. Continue faithful to the end and thou shalt obtain that greatest of all gifts, even eternal life. Thou hast seen much of sorrow because of thy wife; but if thou wilt be faithful she shall yet come to a knowledge of the truth, and will honor me even as thou hast. Other trials are before thee, and thou shalt feel the power of Satan as never before, for most bitterly does he oppose those who with full purpose of heart seek to serve God. But if thou wilt be steadfast thou shalt have strength to overcome, and thy experiences shall teach thee and fit thee for a great work, even to raise the weak and fallen. And now I commend thee to the keeping of God and say unto thee, my brother, in the name of Jesus Christ, receive ye the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The Spirit bore witness to Mr. Brown of the truthfulness of this prophecy; but had he received

no other evidence the reference to his wife, of whom he had not spoken, would have seemed to him good proof that the elder spoke not by his own wisdom alone.

Very much did Mr. Brown enjoy the services of the day. He felt a satisfaction and peace he had never before experienced, and his regret was that he had not known these things before.

Speaking of this to the elder he said, "I might have heard these things and come into the church years ago, for I was once where I might have attended your meetings, but hearing that you were believers in the Book of Mormon I did not give it another thought, for I knew of course something of the wrong practices and teachings of those commonly called Mormons. What could I think but that a Mormon was a believer in and follower of the teachings contained in that book? The world is not to blame for supposing Mormonism to be taken from the Book of Mormon. How could they guess that it is in direct opposition to the teachings of that book?

"I believe the Devil is at the bottom of this, applying the name to those people who have made it almost a synonym for polygamy, murder, etc., until no wonder the world shrinks, almost with loathing, from the book which they naturally suppose teaches these things. I believe for this very reason many an honest soul has failed, as I did, to give attention to your teachings unless they are literally forced upon them; for who would think of looking for the

church of Jesus Christ among those whom they class with murderers and adulterers!

"Pardon me for presuming to criticise, but I have been greatly surprised and pained to discover that even your people, who so well know the difference, are joining in with the world and, I believe, with the Devil, in tarnishing the name of that pure and good man, that faithful follower of Jesus Christ. And worse than that, giving their aid in blinding the world to those very things you are trying to make plain, hindering your own work.

"As for myself, I hope I shall never once use the word *Mormon* in a way to deceive or mislead any one as to the teaching of that book."

So much had Mr. Brown enjoyed the association with the Saints that he felt loath to part with them; but on Monday he turned his face homeward, arriving there about four o'clock.

When he would have given her his customary kiss, his wife drew back and said, "Tell me first, have you joined that Mormon church?"

"No, I certainly have not," he said. Then, as her face brightened up, he went on hastily, "There is no such thing in existence as a Mormon church. You will not find a church incorporated under that name in the whole world, I am quite sure. I'll tell you what I did do, though; I joined the church of Jesus Christ, the church teaching the pure and unadulterated gospel, and acknowledged by him as his church."

She turned without a word and went to her room, where he heard her weeping bitterly. In vain he

pleaded with her to unlock the door and let him in, assuring her that matters were not so bad as she thought, and begging for a chance to explain things as they were. She would make no reply and finally he went to do his night's work.

But how changed everything seemed. His wife's sad face seemed to crowd out all else. He felt almost condemned for the joy he had felt in that which was bringing her sorrow. While he saw plainly that her trouble was imaginary and unnecessary, yet he knew that to her it seemed real, and his heart ached for her.

It seemed, however, in the days that followed, almost as if she chose to be unhappy, for she utterly refused to listen to any explanation from him. This was hard for him, for he felt so sure if she would consent to talk the matter calmly over with him that much of her grief would be removed.

He had little rest on the night of his return home. His wife refused to unlock the door, and at intervals he heard her crying. Sad and troubled, and fearing she would make herself sick, he passed the long hours of the night.

Early in the morning he kindled the fire, then, feeling sure Mrs. Brown would have one of her sick headaches, he decided, as the girls were away, to get breakfast, although unused to such work.

After putting some potatoes in to bake he milked his cow, then made the tea, and was just putting the finishing touches to some toast when his wife, pale and heavy-eyed, appeared in the door.

Surprised, she exclaimed, "Why, James, who is here?"

"No one, my dear," he replied, "but I feared you would have a headache so I thought I would try to help you."

Touched a little by his thoughtfulness, she sat down; but after drinking the tea and trying to eat a few mouthfuls, was obliged to confess that she was sick and unable to sit up. Mr. Brown made her as comfortable as possible, then did up the work as neatly as he could.

Margaret was away teaching, and Alice attending school, so she was dependent upon him for all.

Her sickness lasted several days and, as she used to say afterwards, was a blessing in disguise, for she had resolved to keep him at a distance, to treat him as a stranger; but now she was obliged to let him take his old place. So, excepting a slight coldness and constraint upon her part, and a complete avoidance of all topics relating to religion, their daily lives, outwardly at least, seemed much as usual.

Mr. Brown took his earliest opportunity to write to Eva, giving her a full account of the conference and of his baptism, and expressing his great satisfaction and joy in the gospel.

"My heart seems overflowing with gratitude to my heavenly Father for his goodness and mercy to me, and I thank him for sending you to me with the gospel message.

"He has permitted you to be an instrument in his hands to bring me to the knowledge of the fullness

of the gospel. I thank you that you did not fear to make known to me the truth. Had you, knowing we did not like the step you had taken, kept silent along these lines, what a loss would have been mine."

As the days went by, Mrs. Brown was obliged to confess to herself that her husband had never been so thoughtful and considerate of her before.

She realized that he seemed to be growing better each day, while she was apparently growing worse.

At times this shamed and humbled her; at other times it aroused only a feeling of irritation against him. She did not understand herself these days; she had always been gentle and even tempered, but now it was only by a great effort that she could keep so, and she was often overcome. At such times, when she was fretting and impatient, she often felt it would be a relief if he would say something in the same strain; but he would only say, "You are not feeling well, dear, and you have to work too hard. We must not let both girls go away again." And then he would try the harder to be of help to her.

Thus several years passed by, with Mr. Brown happy in the gospel, yet having much to grieve him because of the way his wife, daughters, and neighbors regarded it. The latter, in particular, seemed to consider it their duty to make him feel the weight of their disapproval, and to convince him of the error of his ways.

Yet as time went on, his uprightness and integrity, his ready helpfulness to all in need, won for him their respect, and his influence was such that when in the course of time an elder visited the town

and held meetings, a fair attendance was given him, for, as some one said, "A faith that such a man as Mr. Brown indorses can not have anything bad in its teachings."

Mr. Brown often thought of the promise made him at his confirmation that his wife should yet obey the gospel. It seemed a strange thing to believe at times, as she still hardened her heart, even refusing to attend the little meeting at the school-house when her husband was ordained to preach Christ.

This caused him pain, yet, could he have known the thoughts that filled her heart he would have been made to rejoice.

For, as she sat there alone after he and Alice had gone, she fell to reviewing the past and suddenly realized, with something of a shock, that her husband's religion was making him better, that he was developing all the time, and that he had a joy and peace which she did not possess, although she had once seemed to.

A great longing took possession of her to be at rest once more.

And now she allowed herself at last to face the matter squarely, and finally she was obliged to admit that she was rejecting things which she knew to be true and scriptural, and that she was doing this because of pride, and because of a fear that if she once listened and acknowledged any part true she might become convinced of the truth of all the belief, and then she, too, would need to be baptized. A great horror filled her as she saw her heart at last,

and realized fully for the first time to what pride was leading her.

"And what has it given me in return," she thought, somewhat bitterly. "It has taken away my peace, marred our happy home life, made me unwilling to read my Bible, for I can not help but see those teachings so plainly whenever I do, and I have found no joy in prayer. Lately I have shrunk from it, and I know why now. It is because at the very time when I have been asking for help to live right and to do God's will I have been firmly resolved at that same time to do only such of his commandments as are popular and easy, to accept only such light as shall come in the way I think it should. No wonder the heavens have seemed a blank above me.

"And all this time I have been trying to think the blame all rests upon James, that our life together is not so happy as it was; and yet he has been earnestly trying to follow his convictions, while I have been fighting against mine. He has always been kind and forbearing, always thinking of my comfort, while I have tried to make him unhappy. Now perhaps he will go away preaching and I shall be left alone. Oh, how I wish I had been different! It is no part of a Christian to do as I have done. Now, whatever he believes, that I know is true, and of course a good deal of it is true, I will acknowledge, and I will try to make his home happy."

After asking God's forgiveness and help she felt happier than for a long time, and met her husband

upon his return with a smile and so loving a look that his heart was made glad.

She wanted to tell him all; how she regretted the course she had taken, how she did care for him and wish to make him happy. But the restraint of the past years was hard to break, so she showed her changed feelings only by an unusual thoughtfulness for his comfort and wishes.

The next day she asked, with some effort, where his friend the elder was staying, and said she supposed if a stove were set up in the west room that he would be comfortable there.

Mr. Brown looked at her in surprise, for she had so opposed the elder's coming there that he had not urged it, but had provided for him elsewhere.

"Do you mean that you are willing he should stay here?" he asked gladly.

It was a struggle, but she said, "Yes." Then the victory over self being won, she put forth every effort to make him comfortable, and his visit a pleasant one.

In spite of herself, she became interested in the conversation carried on between her husband and their guest regarding the troublous times that were to come upon the earth and were in fact already beginning, when iniquity should abound, and when blood should be shed at every man's door. "Surely that is true," she thought. "One has only to read a daily newspaper to see that we are entering upon such a period."

She listened eagerly when they began to tell about Zion, the place where the pure in heart are to gather

to await in safety the coming of Christ, and as they went on to speak of the signs indicating that his coming was nigh at hand, and spoke of conditions to prevail during the millennium; how it was to be upon this earth that Christ was to reign and to be with and teach his Saints, and fit them for the presence of God when he shall come from heaven to be among men, she was filled with wonder.

That evening when all were gone to meeting she got her Bible, and by the aid of her concordance and their conversation she found much along the line of thought.

She recalled Christ's words, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." She read in Revelation 5:10: "We shall reign on the earth."

Also Psalm 37, which seemed full of promises about inheriting the earth.

Then she read Revelation 20 about the first resurrection, and those who had part in it reigning with Christ a thousand years, even as her husband had said.

"Why, it does speak as though we were to be upon this earth," she thought. "I can't just now think of many promises that we are to go to heaven.

"It does speak of going to paradise, though, and I suppose that is heaven."

She wished they would talk again along this line, but they did not, and she could not bring herself to ask questions.

On Sunday, as they were to start to meeting, her husband looked at her so wistfully that her decision was instantly made to go with them. She had found

much pleasure during the past few days in giving up her own will, and in seeing the pleased look on Mr. Brown's face. So she said, "Wait a minute and I will go with you, James." To her delight the subject of the discourse was that which was then interesting her, the resurrection, the earth restored to its Edenic beauty and perfection, and the great things in store for those who keep God's commandments.

He explained paradise as the place of the departed dead where, under such conditions as their lives had entitled them to, they awaited the resurrection of the body, the good in a state of rest and peace, those who had done wickedly under punishment. Not a hell of literal fire where they were to be tortured for ever by a God who was taking vengeance upon them, but where their suffering, though great, even as a fire, was yet sent upon them for their own good, to teach them obedience, since they had refused to learn it any other way; that when it had accomplished its work it would end, for every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

He gave Paul's comparison of conditions in the resurrection,—the three glories, sun, moon, and stars. Mrs. Brown saw plainly how wonderful was the first glory as compared with the others, and she realized vividly what a loss those would have who had to be taught obedience in the hereafter; for the sun glory, or celestial glory, was for those who are Christ's at his coming. The rest all through the thousand years of the millennium were to be in

the prison-house, in a state of suffering, while those who had kept God's commandments would be with Christ on the earth under his righteous rule.

"I don't want to be among those who have to learn obedience in the pit because I refuse to obey in my time of probation," she thought. "I must study God's word; I must examine myself and see if I am keeping the commandments. This is a matter I dare not trifle with longer.

"But there are those who died without ever even having a chance to know God's commands. And besides, if to have the celestial glory one must be obedient to the gospel in its fullness and it was not restored, he says, till 1830, what about the many and many earnest Christians who have lived and died without ever hearing it? It does not seem fair nor just that they should never have a chance. Just because they did not happen to be born at just the right time must they for ever have a lesser glory? I can not believe such things as that."

Even while such thoughts as these were flashing through her mind the elder touched upon this very point. He showed that one could be held responsible only for living up to what light one had opportunity to receive.

He then mentioned that teaching which, while given in the word so plainly, is yet often overlooked by many, that of the gospel being preached to the dead (see 1 Peter 4:6) that they might be judged according to men in the flesh.

All who would have received the gospel in this life, had opportunity been given them, will have the

chance to do so later, for God is just, and the plan of salvation is for all the human family. All will have opportunity to comply with its requirements.

He closed his sermon with an earnest appeal to his hearers not to neglect the opportunity that was now theirs, and not to flatter themselves that they could just as well wait and receive the gospel in the spirit state, for "these promises," said he, "are not for those who hear the word but for those who never have the privilege in this life."

Mrs. Brown enjoyed the meeting very much. It was all so new to her, and yet there was nothing that the Bible did not teach.

She wondered a little why she had never heard such sermons before, and felt if this was a sample of their meetings she did not wonder at Mr. Brown's interest. Her mind was now filled with new thoughts. The resurrection had never meant much to her, but now it was a reality.

"I wonder if the churches really do believe in the resurrection of the body? If they do not, what do they believe it means?" she questioned.

The idea of Christ really coming to earth again was new to her, too, for she had simply held some vague idea that his second coming was only to take home some of his faithful children when they died. Now, in reading the Bible, passage after passage seemed to stand out with such plainness she could not understand how she had ever overlooked them.

"Oh, it is beautiful, beautiful!" she said to herself. "Oh, what have I done to close my ears to this so long!"

Now she felt she could not hear enough. Yet, so odd and stubborn is human nature, she could not yet acknowledge this to her husband, although longing for his sympathy and help, and knowing, too, what a joy it would be to him.

She attended the meetings during the week. Much to her surprise, one night the elder invited her husband into the stand to preach.

"Why, he's written no sermon, I know, for he has been hard at work all the week!" she whispered to Alice. "What can he be thinking of to try such a thing?" she asked, full of anxiety.

Alice, although a little nervous, was not so troubled, for she had a good understanding of the gospel and knew when the Lord calls a man to preach he will give him a message to deliver.

And so, indeed, it proved that night. The power of the Spirit was felt by all. Mrs. Brown soon ceased to fear that he had undertaken what he could not perform, and she listened in wonder. She felt that surely this must be by the Spirit of God.

Alice, too, was deeply moved, and resolved that she would no longer put off being baptized.

She had long felt a desire to unite with the church, and had delayed only to spare her mother's feelings. But now she resolved that nothing should stand between her and her duty.

So the next morning she told her mother of her resolution.

Instead of the protests she expected, her mother began crying and said she would be baptized too, if only she were good enough; but she had done so

wrongly all these years that she did not believe the Lord would receive her now.

Alice tried to comfort her mother, but hardly knowing what to say she soon slipped out and brought her father, then went away, leaving them together.

"Dear wife, is this true?" he asked tenderly, taking her in his arms. "Do you see the beauties of the gospel at last?"

"Oh, James," she said as she clung to him, the tears flowing fast; "oh, can you forgive me? I am so sorry, and do you suppose God will forgive me; that it is not too late for me?"

Mr. Brown had no difficulty in assuring her of his forgiveness, and in showing her that the Lord by his Spirit was striving with her and seeking to bring her into the fold.

This hour was one never to be forgotten by either. All differences gone, the restraint of years removed, these two entered upon a new life together, one nevermore to be marred by misunderstandings, or differences; one full of love and perfect sympathy.

As together they knelt and returned thanks to God for his goodness, how great was Mr. Brown's gratitude and joy in the fulfillment of the promise made him at his confirmation, that his wife should be brought to a knowledge of the truth.

Although the weather was very cold, neither Mrs. Brown nor Alice wished any delay, so Mr. Brown himself had the privilege of leading his loved ones into the waters of baptism.

"Now if only Margaret were here to have been

baptized with us, my cup of joy would be full," said Mrs. Brown that night.

"She has not seemed to have much interest in religion for some years. Even before her marriage I had noticed that," responded Mr. Brown.

"Let's write and coax her to come home for a visit," suggested Alice, "and when she sees the change the gospel has made in our home she may become interested, too."

This plan was carried out, but it was some months before Margaret found her way clear for the desired visit.

These winter months were full of pleasure to the Browns. They had a topic of never-failing interest, the glorious truths of the gospel, to discuss; while their evenings were spent in studying together and in reading of the progress of the work in other places.

Mrs. Brown often spoke of the satisfaction and peace she had found, and mourned for those years when she had made herself unhappy, all so needlessly.

"And to think I might have been enjoying so much all that time and making so much progress," she would say, "I don't suppose I can ever make up for that lost time."

"I did not have what I now do by any means," she one time said to her husband, "yet I truly did have peace and joy in the Baptist Church, and felt that the Lord was blessing me. Why did that cease after Eva came and told us so much about this?"

"I think," he replied thoughtfully, "that the Lord

blessed us then because we were truly living up to the light we had received; that is all that was required of us at that time. But when greater light came, if we rejected it, we could not longer expect the peace of God's approval."

In June Margaret and her little boy came for a few weeks' visit.

She noticed at once the difference in the atmosphere of their home, and also the marked improvement in her mother's health. For upon keeping the Word of Wisdom Mrs. Brown's health had materially improved. Her sick headaches had ceased, and her nerves had become strong.

Seeing these changes and their interest and enjoyment in their new life, Margaret soon became interested. Finally, in talking with her mother, she confessed that she had believed these things were true ever since Eva's visit, when she had first heard of them; and because of stubbornness and pride she had hardened her heart and refused to consider her duty in the matter. So she had partially succeeded in putting the questions from her; but since the birth of her boy and she had realized her responsibility in the care and training of an immortal soul, she had felt deeply her own unworthiness.

"Now I want to serve God fully, to make the most of my own life, so that I may be worthy to bear the name of mother."

So before her return to her home she, too, was initiated into the fold of Christ.

That evening as they were expressing their thankfulness for the events of the day, Mrs. Brown said,

"Oh, James, what if you had hearkened to me and never gone on in this work! What a loss we all should have had, even in this life! We should have missed that which makes life most worth living. I do thank you for not yielding to my wishes."

"We thank you, too," said Alice and Margaret. "Your remaining firm at that time doubtless changed the whole course of our lives."

Mr. Brown's thoughts then went back to the night of his great struggle, when he had sought so earnestly to know if he must obey the gospel against his wife's wishes.

"I have something to tell you," he said. So he described to them his struggle, and the vision he received, then read to them from his diary the words which had been spoken to him:

"Fear not to follow where the Lord shall lead. Thus only can you work for the best interests of your loved ones. Be true to duty and they will yet thank you for it. Fail now and you will not only bring condemnation upon your soul, but you will have closed the door for them to enter the kingdom. Trust, and fear not."

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As the months went by the Browns made preparations to spend Thanksgiving with Eva; for Eva is no longer in her brother's home, but has a home of her own.

She has for her life companion a noble, earnest young man. The perfect confidence and love existing between the two is beautiful to see. No im-

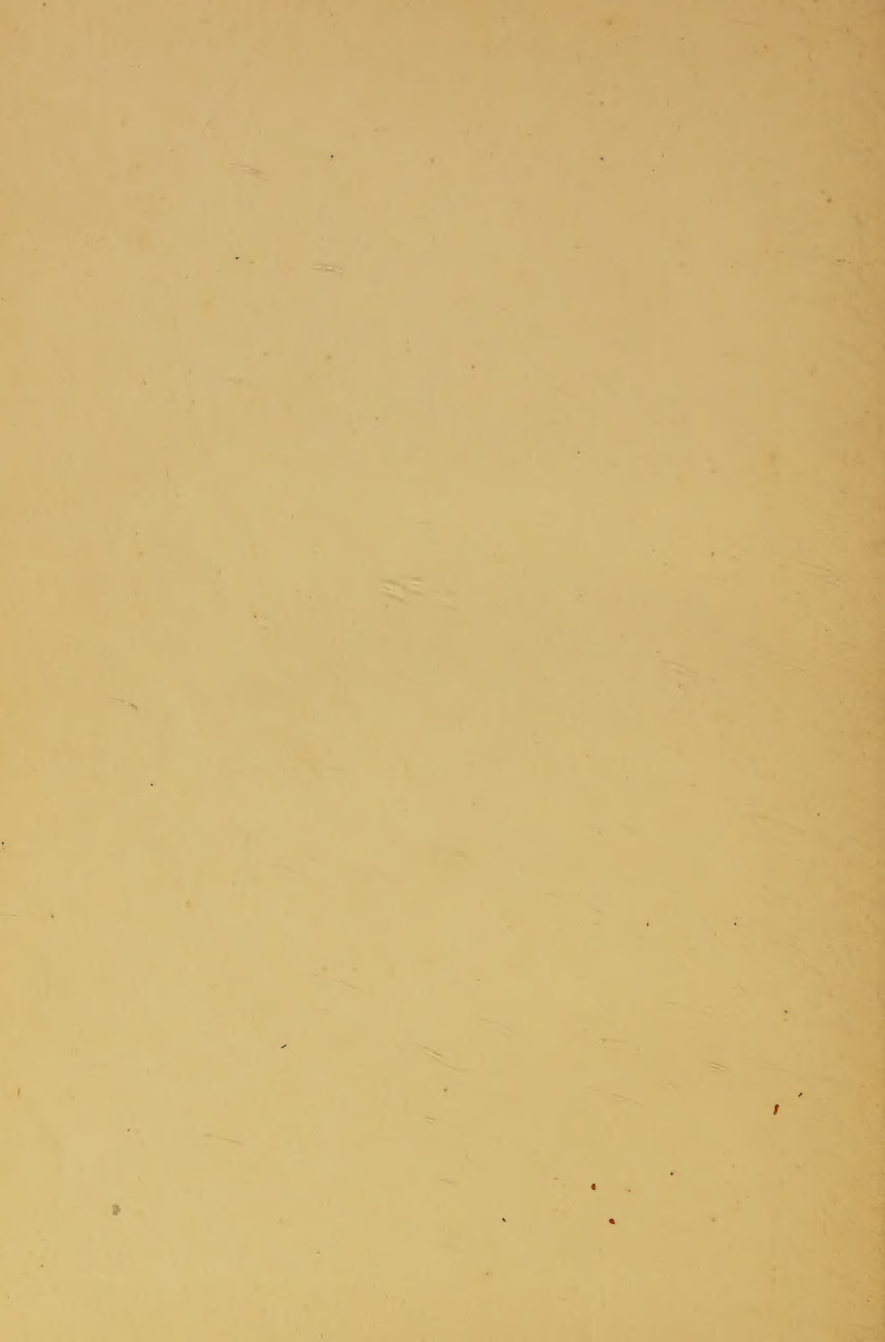
patient or faultfinding words mar the peace of this home. Here the name of God is revered and his commandments kept. Here the little ones are gathered about their parents night and morning at the family altar, and they are being taught the principles of the gospel and how to apply them in their lives.

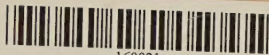
Although so pleasantly situated now, Eva has seen much of sorrow and trial.

At this Thanksgiving time, when all were assembled at Eva's home, uncle, aunt, cousins, and her brother's family, the conversation turned upon the past.

"Eva," said Mr. Brown, "I feel we owe you a great debt of gratitude for what you have done for us in bringing to us the gospel."

"I do not feel that you need to thank me at all," she replied. "The work was not mine. I have been simply *an instrument in his hands*."





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